

# Hegel's Philosophy of Language



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# Hegel's Philosophy of Language

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Finally, I dedicate this book to Prapti, for every expressible reason.

## Abbreviations

- PS* Hegel, G. W. F., *Phenomenology of Spirit* (trans A. V. Miller; Oxford: Clarendon, 1977).
- SL* Hegel, G. W. F., *Science of Logic* (trans A. V. Miller; New York: Humanity, 1969).
- W* Hegel, G. W. F., *Werke* (ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus; 20 vols.; Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970–).

All translations are my own, with the exception of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (*W* 3) and the *Wissenschaft der Logik* (*W* 5–6). In these cases I have used the standard A. V. Miller translations above. Hegel's own remarks to the *Encyclopaedia* (*W* 10) are denoted by 'Anm.'.

## Introduction

The task I have set for myself in this book is both commonplace and novel. Certainly, its focus is common enough, for it offers answers to some of the most general philosophical questions regarding language: Why do we speak? What is a word? How is language structured? Is syntactical form universal? To account for these various aspects of language in a manner that also systematically determines their structural interrelation would be to develop a schematic philosophy of language, which is precisely what this book proposes to do.

While the development of such a theory ought to be the concern of any systematic philosopher, it is of particular concern to Hegel, who purports to provide a completed system of philosophy. However, no study of Hegel has thoroughly investigated the possibility that Hegel explicitly or implicitly developed such a general linguistic theory. Many studies have in fact denied that a coherent theory of language can be found within, or derived from, Hegelian philosophy. Against the scholarly consensus on the topic, this book articulates a general philosophy of language that is specifically Hegelian. In other words, the book's novelty lies in the fact that it answers some fairly orthodox questions about the nature of language through a fairly heterodox philosophical source.

In the first part of this introduction,<sup>1</sup> I will introduce the problem that necessitates Hegel's account of language acquisition through a quick sketch of the detailed reading of Hegel I will undertake in Chapter 2. My goal, here, is to identify some of the most elementary questions that a general philosophy of language must answer. I will then offer a schematic history of modern linguistic projects by systematic philosophers and their critics, situating Hegel in relation to his antecedents Descartes, Kant, the 'Metacritics' and Fichte, as well as to his descendants Husserl, Frege and Saussure. Here, I aim to show that my reading of Hegel will synthesize the valuable contributions each alternative theory makes to the resolution of the basic questions, while simultaneously avoiding the problems caused by their one-sided approaches. Finally, I will consider the secondary literature on Hegel and language, in order to demonstrate both the novelty and necessity of my approach. In other words, the goal of this introduction is to demonstrate that the most basic questions language

philosophies of language. Hegel's linguistics can be most fruitfully compared to Cartesian, Kantian, 'Metacritical', Fichtean, Husserlian, Fregean and Sassurean accounts.

### **A Cartesian Linguistics<sup>3</sup>**

For Descartes, language is an expression of the creative freedom of the specifically human, rational mind. In contrast to the brute cries of animals (who always scream identically in pain, etc.) human language expresses the capacity for human thought to freely react to new experiences, proving that reason is unconstrained by animal instinct, mechanical necessity or habitual association. This is because no innate mechanism or acquired habit can account for the novelty present in almost all examples of speech. This creativity is possessed even by those humans with precious little intelligence or without speech (e.g., the deaf and mute), and is not present in lesser creatures that have the requisite physiognomy for speech (e.g. singing birds). Thus, language is a property specific to rational beings and is grounded neither in the cultivation of intelligence, nor in the physiognomy of expression. As such, language presupposes the existence of a free rational mind that is universal to all speakers (as the natural endowment of humans), while the expressions of that mind are contingent and particular (as unconstrained and novel).

Thus, in answer to our three questions, for Descartes: (1) the presupposed ground of communication is the universal, species-specific endowment of free human reason, (2) this ground can be determined as universal by the unconstrained use of language present in all humans and (3) on a strong reading, language and thought would form an identity (i.e. the form of free reason would be identical to the form of free language), while on a weak one, their forms would be isomorphic, but intimately related. Whatever formal structures they possess, however, they must be minimal, since both are defined by their absolute freedom. Rational thought can no more be bound by fixed and rigid grammars than human speech can be restricted in its range of content, and thus their forms must be minimal and mutually complementary. Language and thought each possess common, minimal structures which facilitate, rather than pre-form, the free exercise of reason.

### **A Kantian Linguistics**

Kant's explicit comments on language are surprisingly few and scant. The *Prolegomena*, however, contains a brief statement of Kant's general



theory of language's relation to the Critical philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Like Descartes, Kant contends that it is only through our experiences with language users that we can ground claims about the relationship between language and reason. However, he draws attention to the fact that all such experiences are merely empirical. Studying language means studying the contingent 'actual use of words' by subjects, and one can no more determine the conditions for the possibility of such particular experiences of language than one can for experiences of particular paintings or animals. While one can, of course, detect some patterns or 'rules' across usage, this is akin to finding regularities amongst rock formations or flowers.

Thus language, as purely empirical and contingent, is not open to transcendental reflection and therefore 'we are not able to give a reason why each language has just this and no other formal constitution, and still less why any precise number of such formal determinations in general, neither more nor less, can be found in it'.<sup>5</sup> Language is simply one empirical phenomenon amongst others, and one can gain no more knowledge about the form of cognition from it than one can from some specific rock. Linguistic research, then, is of no interest to the Critical philosophy, as one can never achieve formal necessity for any specifically linguistic determination. Language and thought are totally independent of each other, and one can only demonstrate the universal form of our experience by reflection on the conditions of the possibility of experience of objects in general, not linguistic objects in particular.

Thus, our three questions are answered by essentially refuting them as valid questions: (1) all proposed universal grounds specific to communication are equally spurious, (2) no formal universal whatsoever can be determined through language, as the latter is a contingent, particular experience and (3) the universal form of experience or thought is indifferent to the form of linguistic expression. Thus, the very same aspect of language (the contingency of its use in empirical experience) that united language and thought for Descartes is, for Kant, that which separates the two. Thought and language have no relationship that can be determined through philosophical investigation, and even if one seems to exist (e.g., the relation between grammar and logic) it is a chance product, rather than a necessary expression.

### **A Metacritical Linguistics<sup>6</sup>**

To speak of a Metacritical linguistics in general may initially appear unjustified, given the disparate positive programmes that the thinkers of this movement developed for understanding language. However, its



principal figures – Hamann, Maimon and Herder – developed similar critiques of Kant's Critical philosophy grounded in its lack of a philosophical account of language, and in the process introduced a new set of criteria for answering the problems posed above. Thus, we will answer our questions in accordance with the Metacritical *challenge*.

Taking seriously Kant's claims about the empirical contingency of language, the Metacritics made the further move of applying those claims to the language that expressed the Critical philosophy. If all examples of language are merely empirical and devoid of necessity, then any and every instance of language falls prey to the same charge, including the language of (the Critical) philosophy. Every philosophical proposition is necessarily both thought and expressed through a particular language and as such is bound with the empirically contingent history and associations of its words and forms. Because philosophy can only be thought and expressed through language, the forms and principles it defends can never be 'pure' and necessary, but are always bound with the contingency and historicity of the empirical. Thus, language is not, as Kant would have it, an issue external to philosophy. Rather, it poses an urgent problem for any expression that claims to be objective, universal or necessary. Language and thought cannot be radically separated, as Kant would have it, for we can only think and express philosophical conclusions about thinking in language. Thus, philosophy can only take place through reflection on the language within which it is expressed, not in some 'pure' reason.

While the positive responses to this confrontation proposed by the Metacritics are radically divergent from each other,<sup>7</sup> the answers that the Metacritical challenge in general provides for our questions are clear: (1) while the presupposition behind communication is not clear from language use, the very idea of a universal of thought presupposes a linguistic, or linguistically determined, universal, (2) universals of thought can only be demonstrated through philosophical reflection on language itself, and specifically through the contingent empirical language of a community and (3) since thought is only determinate within language, whatever forms of thought we do determine must be somehow present within language. This does not mean that philosophy is merely a catalogue of the forms of ordinary language, but it does mean that the determinate forms of thought are not external to language, but always immanent to it. In other words, philosophers will not be able to rely on meta-languages, linguistic hierarchies, etc. to 'purify' their work, they can only determine the universal forms of thought (should there be any) by reflecting on the contingent languages in which we think.

## A Fichtean Linguistics

Fichte appears to have attempted to address this Metacritical challenge to the possibility of (Critical) philosophy by deducing the forms of language from one single, basic principle of consciousness.<sup>8</sup> Consciousness, for Fichte, is defined neither by a fixed form of experience or thought (as it is for Kant), nor through an empirical content which determines its possible forms (as it is for some Metacritics). Rather, consciousness is the '*Tathandlung*', or 'fact/act' of its own self-reflective construction. This means that rational consciousness is first and foremost free, in that it is determined neither by external content nor internal form. It also means, however, that the forms of thought are 'created' when thought freely reflects upon its own content and activity. Any and every experience of consciousness, then, must be graspable as reflecting the free, self-determining act of reason.

Consciousness, then, presupposes that all of its contents are in fact one with its free rationality and as such seeks to recognize its own inherent rationality in all that confronts it. This is why it is 'fundamental to man's very essence that he seeks to subjugate the power of nature',<sup>9</sup> for external nature appears to us to be inanimate and irrational. The primary *expression* of freedom (which is a particular class of act) of consciousness is this subjugation of nature, in which we transform the seemingly irrational and determined world through our own free, rational action. This transformation allows us to recognize rational purpose in all that confronts us. In the case of other human beings, however, we need enact no such transformation for the simple reason that, in humanity, we already appear to find rationality present. We generally presume this rationality to exist in other humans because they, too, transform nature according to rational ends.

However, not every action reveals the rationality of subjects. Trees, for example, appear to act purposively, gathering nutrients from the earth in order to grow and bear fruit, etc., but these could hardly be deemed rational ends. Trees lack rationality, not because they never act toward an end, but because they always act toward one and the same end. As we cultivate trees, impose growing situations on them, etc., they fail to react to the manner in which we treat them, demonstrating that they are not free to act towards different ends, and thus have no reason. Thus, it is not enough for us to merely witness the apparently purposive actions of others. Along Cartesian lines, Fichte argues that we can 'view as purposive and freely acting only a being that also alters its purpose after I have dealt with it according to my own purpose'.<sup>10</sup> What matters is not the

action, but the free rationality behind it, and it is evidence of the other's freedom that we seek.

Thus, there is a distinction between the universal freedom to act that we presume in the actions of others, and the acts through which we can recognize it. Consciousnesses freely act in the world, but the free intention behind each action is not equally recognizable through all particular acts. We are consequently driven to truly determine the presence of rationality in others, and 'it is precisely this drive that ... produce[s] in [us] the wish to indicate [our] thoughts to the other'<sup>11</sup> by means of language.

Fichte argues, then, that language arises because it is an act which is recognizable in its very nature as the free activity of reason. Language, or '*the expression of our thoughts by means of arbitrary signs*'<sup>12</sup> is an active medium through which free rationality can be recognized. This language arises as freely created vocal and/or visual signs that are freely utilized to express a variety of rational purposes. Thus, language is free both in construction and use (i.e., we freely acquire language, which consists of arbitrary signs, and freely choose to use it each time we speak). This does not, however, mean that language is always used in a manner which is *completely* subjective and arbitrary. Fichte argues that language gradually develops over the lives of individuals and cultures to become ever more structured and stable (in terms of both grammar and lexicon). Both the structure and the content of particular languages are contingent upon the free activities of particular cultures and individuals, but they progress both in terms of complexity and sophistication over time. This is not, however, in conflict with free rationality, for we remain free not only to use language when we see fit, but to add to or take away from it (e.g., create idioms, adopt new pronunciations, etc.).

Thus: (1) the universal ground presupposed by communication is the free, active, determining reason of human beings which seeks to recognize itself in others; (2) it can be demonstrated to be universal through both the use of language as arbitrary signs in general, as well as the free use of it in each expression, and the free alterations within it that occur over time and (3) the essential principle of reason is pre-linguistic and presupposed by any and all language use, and thus is not identical with the syntactical form of any given language. However, the forms of all languages are derived from this principle, and so the progressive determination of the principle must lead to forms which are identical to those of the language of the particular 'I'. Thus, the form of thought is both external to language (as the fundamental self-reflection of the *Tathandlung*), and identical to it (as progressively determined through free self-reflective expression). Language and thought will share a common form, but only



because that form presupposes and is posited by a consciousness free from its determination. Thus, Fichte attempts to evade the Metacritical challenge by determining an extra-linguistic principle of reason whose determinate development through self-reflection accounts for the development of determinate linguistic forms of expression.

### A Husserlian Linguistics<sup>13</sup>

While Husserl, like most twentieth-century philosophers, is less interested than his predecessors were in the problem of why we speak, he is concerned with the relationship of thought to language, and what can be discovered regarding the former through the latter. Consciousness, for Husserl, is always the consciousness of some object or objects under some aspect or aspects. Objects of experience can be thought about independently of our merely intuitive experience of them (e.g. in terms of their permanence, reality, composition, unseen sides, etc.) only through the anticipation of experiences that would fulfill our particular ideas about them. These anticipated experiences of objects are called meaning-intentions. Our intentions are fulfilled when the meant objects can be made present and are confuted when our best attempts to make them present fail, but coherent experience is only possible in so far as we intend objects under some aspects. Language is the determinate expression (as internal monologue or external discourse) of these meaning-intentions concerning possible objects of experience. The ground of language, then, is not to be sought in presuppositions concerning other minds arising from our desire to communicate; it is to be found through the phenomenological investigation of the necessary structures of intentional consciousness expressed in language.

For Husserl, language is composed of expressive units (words, prefixes, etc.) that are either *categorematic* (i.e. names of objects, qualities, states of affairs, etc.) or *syncategorematic* (conjunctives, disjunctives, etc.). Categorematic terms appear to have meaning in isolation (e.g. when I say 'lion' I express a specific kind of object about which I can formulate intentions), while syncategorematic terms need to be 'filled in' by categorematic ones (e.g. 'and' is meaningless without supplementation from categorematic terms on either side of it). Thus, categorematic terms name intentional objects (e.g. 'lion', 'yellow'), while syncategorematic terms name intentional aspects that can be posited of them (e.g. '*all lions are yellow*').

However, because categorematic terms express intentional objects, they are only meaningful to consciousness in so far as they are intended

under certain aspects. A name is not an isolated unit, but itself anticipates completion through the determinate possible experiences of the intentional object it names. This determination can only come through syncategorematic terms, which express possible aspects under which categorematic terms could be experienced (e.g. 'all of', 'next to', 'is like', etc.). Thus, categorematic terms anticipate determination through syncategorematic terms just as (albeit in a different fashion) the latter anticipate completion in the former. Categorematic terms name the objects of experience that are intended by consciousness and syncategorematic terms name our determinate forms of intention.

Language, then, consists of two types of words: categorematic terms which anticipate determination under certain syncategorematic aspects, and syncategorematic terms which determine possible intended aspects of categorematic terms. Language has a form (i.e. a syntax of syncategorematic relations between object-terms) and a content (i.e. categorematic terms determinately predicated under the syncategorematic forms) but they are immanent to expression itself, and reciprocally presupposing. To investigate the form of language is to detail the syncategorematic terms that are used in actual language use to determinately predicate intended relations between categorematic terms.

Thus: (1) the ground of language is intentional consciousness in general, which determinately intends objects by judging them under particular aspects; (2) this ground can be demonstrated to be universal by phenomenological investigation of language as used, revealing two sets of words (categorematic and syncategorematic), each of which anticipates its meaningful determination/completion through the other and each of which is required for the determination of intentional objects in general and (3) the form of language consists of the syncategorematic terms that we use to predicate intentional aspects of objects, and the form of thinking is the intending itself. As such, the form of language is either isomorphic or identical with the form of thought, but both are determinate sets of intentional relations that can (but need not) obtain in objects. Thus, the forms of both language and thought contain a finite set of relations that determine our experiences of objects in general.

### **A Fregean Linguistics<sup>14</sup>**

Although a contemporary of Husserl, Frege is less concerned with the necessary structure of our intentional use of language than with determining the criteria for distinguishing between true and false assertions. It is this shift in focus from language itself to language's ability to express

correct statements that, in many ways, leads to the divergence between 'analytic' and 'continental' philosophies of language, and thus it is of some interest to see how Frege's linguistics relates to that of Hegel and the tradition with which he is most commonly associated.

For Frege, the primary function of language is to refer to or denote objects (tables, numbers, etc.). That is to say, the 'meaning' (*Bedeutung*) of a word or phrase is the object to which it refers. Knowing all of the referents of a sentential expression (e.g. knowing the '*Bedeutung*' of each part of 'The USA is in North America') allows us to determine the truth or falsity of that expression (i.e. our above example is true just in case the USA is in North America).

However, if their meaning was all that words conveyed, then sentences of identity involving two noun phrases that share a referent (like 'The USA is the world's only superpower') could not be informative (i.e. it would simply mean 'The USA is the USA'). If information is conveyed in the sentence (i.e. if one can learn that the USA is the world's only superpower from it) then the words must express more than simply their referent, and this 'more' is called their sense (*Sinn*). The sense of a word is a mode of presenting its meaning which is grasped beyond its mere referent when it is properly understood. Thus, while the referent of 'the morning star' and 'the evening star' is the same, their senses convey different information within the expression (the former 'presents' it as the first 'star' to appear, the latter as the last). *Sinne* convey information by indicating 'paths' to the reference, or aspects of the *Bedeutung* that are valuable for knowledge. As such, it is not simply through the referents of its constituents that we can determine the truth of a statement, but through their senses, which indicates how the referents are being talked about informatively.

The sense of a word is its contribution to the meaningfulness of a sentence in which it can become a part. Thus, words anticipate their roles in different sentences because of the senses they have beyond their mere *Bedeutungen*. A sense, however, can be called objective because it is a means of grasping the reference of the term. In Frege's famous analogy, the meaning of a term is like the real moon observed through a telescope, while the sense is like the image of it projected onto the glass. Neither are simply subjective (or mere 'ideas'), as the image can only be projected because of the moon. Rather, the image is a true sense in so far as it is one 'presentation' of the actual moon. Thus, while words can contribute to the meaningfulness of different sentences, the role they play is to determine the conditions under which the sentence would be true. The sentence, 'The USA is in North America' is informative because of the



senses of its parts, but that very informative-ness sets out the conditions under which the sentence would be true: that is, the USA actually being in the continent that also contains Canada and Mexico. Meaningful sentences as a whole thus refer to the truth value of the sentences, or at least to the situation under which the sentence would be true.

While responses to our questions must, because of Frege's vastly different interests, be wrested somewhat from this theory, we may venture answers as follows: (1) What is presupposed as shared here, primarily, is the realm of objects, as it is both that to which words refer, as well as that which prevents our *Sinne* from being merely subjective. Thus, communication is possible because we presuppose that the objects we refer to through senses are universally shared, allowing for senses to be likewise objectively shared. (2) Language does not help demonstrate the objectivity of objects, but it can provide various 'paths' to determining the relations that obtain amongst objects. (3) The forms of language, in so far as we speak accurately, would be isomorphic or identical to that of the objective world.

### A Saussurean Linguistics<sup>15</sup>

Saussure rejects the Fregean idea that words constitute a mere nomenclature, that is 'a list of terms corresponding to a list of [objects]'.<sup>16</sup> Rather, he defines the linguistic sign as a 'two-sided psychological entity' consisting of a subjective concept or idea ('signified') and a sound pattern or articulated vocal tone ('signifier') (mod.).<sup>17</sup> These signs are not created *ex nihilo* by individual speakers, but are acquired by all as the words of the same linguistic community. Lexical acquisition occurs when a subject psychologically links their internal signified with an external, communal signifier into a permanent synthesis. While the acquisition process is performed by individual subjects, it is only within a linguistic community that linguistic signs have 'value', or are agreed upon as having communicative meaning. Language acquisition proper, then, is the subjective synthesis of appropriate internal signifieds with their communally valued external signifiers.

However, pronunciations (or writing styles/typescripts, etc.) are never precisely uniform throughout a language community (people have different voices and script-styles, and never themselves form a word exactly the same twice). As such, some element other than the strict identity or even close similarity of expressions must ground the recognition of particular expressions as communal signs. This ground, Saussure claims, is the difference of signs from each other. This is best understood through



the metaphor of buses on a schedule. What makes the 11:00 bus the same 11:00 bus each day is not its driver, its appearance, the actual vehicle, or even the time it departs, all of which may vary slightly or greatly from day to day. It is defined in relation to those that come before and after it: that is, because it departs after the 10:45 and before the 11:15, it is the 11:00. A sign, Saussure claims, is delimited in so far as it is *not* the signs that surround it in different linguistic chains (mental dictionaries, metonymic relations, etc.).

Language consists of a content (signs) and a form (the system of differences in which the former are delimited) which are mutually determining. The form arises in so far as sounds are articulated into signs unified with concepts and thus enter into chains of difference with others, and the content is only delimited in so far as there is a formal structure of differences. Thus: (1) the presupposed ground of communication is the subjective ability to link signifieds with signifiers that have linguistic value, that is, the desire and ability to communicate subjective ideas to others through a commonly valued lexicon; (2) it can be determined as universal through an analysis of the nature of the sign in lived communication, as the formation of communicative signs is only possible through the psychological linking of concept and sound and (3) the form of language is the system of differences through which signs are delimited, and since signs always exist in difference from each other, it is through this structure that both sign-making and determinate thought are possible.

### **A Hegelian Linguistics**

Language arises as the solution to the problem of subjective idealism. Our intuitive experience presupposes the universality of our (determining form of) experience and when confronted by this implicit presupposition we seek to determine its presupposed objective validity by communicating our ideas to others. In order to communicate effectively, we communicate our formal intentions regarding experience to others by uniting them with the language signs of our community, that is, by acquiring a communal language. By creating signs as unities of our internal ideas and external words, we are able to place our ideas into the communal space of intuition (i.e. to be seen and heard) for confirmation by others. Precisely because it is an intuited content, however, there is nothing in language that tells me that my experience of language itself is identical to that of others. Thus, we speak in language to test our form of experience, but our experience of language only reintroduces the problem of subjective idealism at the linguistic level.

If it is in language that our ideas gain some semblance of objectivity, but in language as commonly experienced that doubt surrounding their objectivity re-arises, then our quest to determine the universality of our ideas must take place within language, but not within language as commonly used. In other words, we must determine the universality expressed within language, but not simply through language as subjectively or communally used. We must abstract from lived language, without abstracting from language itself, for it is in the latter that our ideas (start to) gain objectivity. By examining language outside of use, we can come to know what if any universals can be expressed through it. On my account, our drive to determine the objectivity of our ideas leads us (or at least ought to lead us) to posit our acquired language as a mere set of isolated words, without associations or senses – what Hegel calls *names as such*. By investigating language (i.e. intuited unities of idea and signifier) in isolation from its communicative senses (i.e. from the contingency of particular expressions of subjective intention), we can determine what formal relations necessarily adhere between words *qua* words. These senseless words form the material through which a truly universal form of content-determination can be demonstrated. This universal 'grammatical' form unfolds into predicative relations, revealing the necessary existence of a specific set of syncategorematic terms that express the relations that give words sense in expressions. Thus, the syntactic form that underlies all language is immanent to it, and not merely the contingent imposition of thinking upon it. In this way, the forms of thought and language can be determined as both identical and universal to all expressive minds.

Thus, our Hegelian answers are: (1) The presupposed universal ground of language is the determining formal 'I' through which all subjective experience is made possible. (2) This ground is determined as universal by investigating language *as such*, apart from the intentional senses that create meaningful expressions. Reflection on words as such allows us to deduce a set of necessary logical/grammatical relations through which ideas are related that are common to all minds *qua* linguistic. (3) The form of language is identical to the structure of the formal 'I'.

Hegel, thus, posits a generally Cartesian relation between thought and language by presupposing the universal rationality of the 'I' as the latter's ground. Nonetheless, he also recognizes (with Kant) that our empirical experience with linguistic subjects or expressions fails to demonstrate anything universal or necessary about the form of either language or thought. He departs, however, from the Kantian critique by recognizing the need for a systematic place for language within philosophy, holding instead to the Metacritical claim that language itself must be analysed in

order to determine the forms common to it and thought. Unlike Kant's linguistic critics, however, he rejects lived, natural language as the proper medium for determining or expressing these forms. His project is similar to Fichte's in that it deduces the necessary existence of language forms out of the desire for reciprocal recognition between subjects, but Hegel argues that the form of language must be determined as necessary and common to all possible subjects, and thus cannot simply be freely chosen by individuals or communities. Rather, like Husserl, he holds that since language expresses our intentions regarding objects of intuition our investigations of language must lead to the objective determination of universal forms of determinate experience present therein, and that these are expressed in a set of syncategorematic terms. However, Hegel posits the various formal determinations and syncategorematic terms as deducible from the very idea of words as such, rather than abstracted from lived, meaningful usage. I shall argue that this deduction arises, for Hegel, out of recognizing the fundamental importance of the Fregean distinction between the *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* of words, but Hegel joins Saussure in rejecting the 'nomenclature' theory and identifying the *Bedeutung* of a word as a subjective idea. Finally, while Hegel agrees with Saussure that words are delimited in their differences from each other, he argues that it is in fact the mere difference between terms that unfolds dialectically into a system of determinate forms of the judgment and syllogism, and therefore leads to the development of a universal grammar of thought. Thus, Hegel's theory of language salvages some important aspects of the vaguely Cartesian linguistic tradition (Descartes, Fichte, Husserl), while assimilating the lessons of some of its strongest critics.

There are assuredly other theories of language that could be fruitfully contrasted with Hegel's.<sup>18</sup> I have chosen these particular theories not only because they form a somewhat continuous tradition within which Hegel finds a relevant place, but because those who have written commentaries on Hegel and language have been (consciously or not) influenced by the ideas voiced by the various thinkers that constitute this tradition. I will discuss these readings in the second section of this introduction.

Following my discussion of the secondary literature on Hegel's theory of language, I defend both my interpretation of Hegel's theory, and that theory itself. My primary concern, however, is with defending my interpretation of Hegel's texts. This is not merely because adequately responding to all possible criticisms of each aspect of Hegelian linguistics is a task far beyond the scope of any single work, but because my interpretation (as I shall argue presently) runs counter to all prevailing trends



concerning language within Hegel scholarship. This is not, however, simply a historical study. With this book I aim to (1) articulate a theory of language consistent with Hegel's texts and (2) articulate the most consistent and strongest theory of language that his texts allow. In other words, I seek to defend, here, both the most plausible possible account of Hegel's views regarding language, as well as a strong Hegelian contribution and challenge to the philosophy of language in general. I defend this theory in four progressive chapters.

In the first chapter, I pursue Hegel's explicit comments on the *study* of language, following in particular his various accounts of grammatical instruction. I argue that Hegel's comments on language learning reveal a programme for using his texts on logic and *Geist* to develop a systematic theory of language. Specifically, I argue that Hegel indicates that his *Geist* texts contain his accounts of lexical acquisition and use, while his works on logic offer a deduction of the universal categories and relations of grammar. Thus, language can be studied in Hegel as the dialectical relation between linguistic form and content, grammar and lexicon, *Logik* and *Geist*. This has the advantage of making language itself dialectical, rather than a mere extension or example of the dialectics of consciousness/world or individual/community.

In Chapter 2 I offer a close reading of Hegel's most explicit and sustained account of lexical acquisition, from the *Philosophy of Mind*. As I have intimated above, I construe this text as developing the consequences of the contradiction between the particular contents of our experience and the presupposed universality of its form. This opposition leads mind through crude attempts at expression, to early lexical acquisition to everyday linguistic capacity, none of which successfully demonstrates the universality of the form. I argue that the demand for universal objectivity ought to drive mind to posit its own lexicon as a senseless collection of names as such, thereby stripping language of all vestiges of subjective or contingent peculiarity, creating the material requisite for a truly objective deduction of the form of content-determination.

Chapter 3 presents the deduction of this universal grammatical form from mere names as such. Through an exegesis of the 'Concept' section of Hegel's greater *Logic*, I argue for the necessary existence of a finite set of universal categories, sentence forms and syncategorematic terms (all grounded in the basic 'S is P' predicating judgment-form) as required for the concrete determination of any individual word. This form itself, however, presupposes a content implicitly related by the universal forms, or a lexicon that is always already interrelated according to the universal forms of grammar.

Finally, in Chapter 4 I articulate the reciprocal relationship between the grammatical form and lexical content of language, both by explicating Hegel's theory of language in comparison with those of Gadamer and Derrida, and by unpacking the consequences of this linguistics for understanding the relationship between philosophy and its expression. Through a reading of the 'speculative sentence' of the *Phenomenology's* preface, I argue that logical grammar is the universal, immanent ground for all particular languages. Philosophy must be expressed in the contingent language of a community, since all lexicons are material and communal. While philosophy itself can not enjoy a 'final' or 'adequate' expression, it does provide us with the necessary tools to grasp the universal structures of speculative thought that both make possible and demand constructive dialogue between subjects about experience. In the final analysis, philosophy is the speculative presentation of the universal demand for, and infinite pursuit of, a completely objective discourse.

As I have indicated, this reading of Hegel is somewhat heterodox, and thus before we proceed it is appropriate for us to consider some standard accounts of Hegel's philosophy of language.

## Secondary Literature on Hegel's Theory of Language

Language is not a commonly treated topic in Hegel, and none of the major commentaries that are specifically dedicated to the topic attempts to construct a general Hegelian philosophy of language. Works on Hegel and language may be roughly divided into two categories, based on which of the following questions they (implicitly or explicitly) attempt to answer: (1) what is the specific place of language *within* the development of Hegel's thought? and (2) what is the relationship of language *to* Hegel's thought? Readings in the first group primarily investigate the function of language use within the dialectic of consciousness, and accordingly focus primarily on Hegel's early Jena texts, the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Phenomenology*.<sup>19</sup> Readings of the second confront the 'Metacritical' problem that language's contingency poses for philosophic expression; that is, they try to determine whether or not the objective claims of Hegel's system – and in particular those of the 'pure thinking' of the *Science of Logic* – are undermined by the contingent language in which it is expressed. The first set of readings, then, explores language as the solution to specific problems within the development of certain stages of Hegel's philosophical system, while the second poses language as a

problem for systematic philosophy in general. It is the readings of the latter group that bear most directly on the reading I will undertake, and so my focus in this introduction will be on them. This group of readings divides somewhat conveniently into so-called 'left-wing' and 'right-wing' readings, each taking their cue from positions in a long-standing schism that (I think) plagues Hegelian studies, and I will accordingly present the readings in that fashion. Before we consider these arguments, we should first analyse how the Metacritical problem arises from language's dialectical necessity within philosophy.

### Language within the system

Language is generally portrayed either as a necessary dialectical stage of the development of consciousness, or as the necessary presumption for that development. Readings that presume language in their analysis of consciousness focus primarily on the *Phenomenology*, particularly its opening moves in 'Sense-certainty'. For example, Cook argues that the *Phenomenology* was written by a mature Hegel who had ceased thinking of 'language as an explicit level of expression in the development of consciousness', correctly grasping language as the 'means for understanding that very development'.<sup>20</sup> Thus, language provides the essential basis for developing an account of consciousness at all and is presumed at every developmental stage. Language, therefore, 'cannot be treated "in and for itself"', and thus there is no possibility of a general 'Hegelian philosophy of language'.<sup>21</sup>

If language is presumed at every stage of consciousness, then Hegel's account of it would amount merely to a cataloguing of language practices. Hegel would then be read as having taken the so-called 'linguistic turn', concluding that 'all the questions which philosophers have asked... can be answered by answering questions about the use of linguistic expressions, and in no other way'.<sup>22</sup> Following this interpretation, Lamb<sup>23</sup> compares Hegel's system to the linguistic analyses of Wittgenstein, claiming that, since for 'Hegel, there are no [determinate] foundations for language', the philosopher's task can only be to 'describe the uses of language as it is employed within a given system of knowledge'.<sup>24</sup> Soll,<sup>25</sup> Plumer<sup>26</sup> and Dulckeit<sup>27</sup> accordingly offer readings of the *Phenomenology*'s inaugural 'Sense-certainty' chapter as a theory of demonstrative reference, with the former two arguing that Hegel denies its possibility and the latter arguing that he specifies the conditions under which it can succeed. Bodammer's methodology is to analyse language in progressive stages of use (from psychology to logic), analysing the types of language according to the



strict context in which they appear, thus revealing how different kinds of language introduce and solve different problems for consciousness.<sup>28</sup>

Findlay, taking this reading to its obvious conclusion, argues that Hegel's presupposition of language for philosophy ultimately prevents him from demonstrating the truth of his philosophy. While Hegel is to be credited with demonstrating the inherently limited and inadequate nature of all of our various ways of talking about the world, this very demonstration implies the partiality of Hegel's own discourse:

Hegel recommends for our adoption a given way of talking about the world, then discovers flaws ... in this mode of speaking, then supercedes it by a further recommendation [and, therefore] there can be no question ... of either truth or validity in such a series of recommendations. There can only be questions regarding the linguistic or conceptual adequacy of its terms.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, if language is a pre-requisite for analysing consciousness, then Hegel's system succumbs to language's essential contingency.

Many commentators, however, find this reading of Hegel suspect. Houlgate, for example – while agreeing that the dialectical method is akin to studying language because determinate 'thoughts can only exist in language' – accurately argues that Hegel's dialectic of consciousness is not simply undertaking 'a Wittgensteinian examination of the specific linguistic activities of commanding, reporting, guessing, requesting, thanking and so on'.<sup>30</sup> Hegel treats language as 'an essentially social phenomenon intended to meet man's need for "theoretical communication"', or a need that arises directly out of Hegel's account of consciousness.<sup>31</sup> Language, then, is not a given to be examined *in situ*, but a necessary development that meets one of mind's intrinsic demands, and as such its origin and nature can and must be explicated.

The specific nature of this demand is explored in many commentaries on Hegel. Cook, for example, argues that in Hegel's Jena texts, language arises from the subjective need to eradicate the difference between the subject and its object. Linguistic signs for Cook are employed by a single mind for the purpose of idealizing the objects of intuition, or transforming external objects into subjective internalities. By naming objects, we turn them into something *geistig*, eliminating their external determining power. This individual language, he argues, is later grasped as a communal language as the individual transforms herself from an isolated mind to a communal being by reflecting on her individual language use. This reading, however, not only brings together juvenilia with mature



works that develop conflicting accounts of the same phenomena (cf., e.g. the use of 'sign' in his earliest system of Spirit and in the 'Culture' sections of the *Phenomenology*),<sup>32</sup> but seems to posit an untenable difference between two kinds of language. The language of the community, which each individual apparently speaks, would only be genuinely communal in so far as all speakers consciously reflect upon the communal nature of their individual expression. This reading seems to contradict the very idea of natural language, to say nothing of the constitutive inter-subjectivity of expression for Hegel.

Most other commentators avoid this pitfall by correctly grounding the relationship between the individual and her speech in the recognition consciousness seeks in inter-subjectivity. Kojève<sup>33</sup> agrees that consciousness strives to overcome the subject/object dichotomy, but argues that consciousness consequently desires to become the object. We seek to internalize objects because we desire them and this desire becomes the desire to have the desirable value we find in objects. In short, we want to be recognized by others as being objectively valuable. We could only be certain, however, that we had achieved this 'objectively valuable' status if we could recognize the desire for ourselves in other beings. If their desire for us were enacted by merely animalistic methods such as eating or killing, we would not be able to recognize the substitution as we would be destroyed in the process. Thus, a medium is required that facilitates the recognition of desire in others and this medium is language. The desiring human being, then, is objectively recognizable only in so far as it speaks (expressing desire) and is spoken of (having desire for it expressed): 'To understand man by understanding his "origin" is, therefore, to understand the origin of the I revealed by speech'.<sup>34</sup> This articulation of subjectivity through universal speech is called self-consciousness.<sup>35</sup> As such, the individual who acquires language is not an isolated individual, who only later reflects upon her communal existence; to the contrary, the dialectic of consciousness asserts the origin of language as explicitly and always inter-subjective.<sup>36</sup> One need not accept Kojève's focus on the desire to become the object to grasp the basic point: language arises to facilitate the actualization of self-consciousness through mutual recognition, and thus always and only exists *between* subjects.

Because language can only exist between subjects, or in a community, H. S. Harris<sup>37</sup> correctly argues that language must be an 'impersonal institution' which facilitates communication with, and recognition from, the general community of others.<sup>38</sup> The impersonal, inter-subjective nature of language sometimes leads commentators to focus too greatly on the communal aspect. Habermas,<sup>39</sup> for example, argues that Hegel

primarily conceives of language as a social medium, like labour and the family, which draws the isolated individual into line with the civil sphere of the wider community. Navickas goes so far as to argue that for Hegel language, as the primary communal bond between subjects, is 'the most suitable means for expressing and rendering service to the power of the state'.<sup>10</sup>

However Hyppolite, in a reading much closer to Hegel's text, argues that communal language should be understood as 'the middle term of [distinct] intelligences', or the medium through which different individual subjects engage with each other.<sup>11</sup> Language is utilized by *separate* individuals to achieve their own desired inter-subjective recognition. Thus, while it is the method by which an individual or 'I' can 'move up to universality' by being recognized by the community through its linguistically based institutions, it is no less the subjective act wherein 'the universal, reciprocally, can become I' by being expressed through distinct individuals.<sup>12</sup> Public discourse is produced by individuals with different experiences, ideas and desires; and thus, while it is the medium through which communal consensus and recognition can be sought and reached, it is also that through which public disagreements, misinterpretations and revolutionary challenges can be voiced. Language expresses both the life and death of inter-subjective community and recognition because it objectively actualizes any and all subjects in the impersonal public realm.

Thus, language is a universal, inter-subjective institution – neither simply subjective, nor strictly communal – through which individuals can express their intentions and ideas. Language is the medium through which the experiences of individuals can be articulated to, and recognized or rejected by, others. Language expresses subjectivity both by objectifying it for others to experience, and by opening it up to the challenge of others, with whom we are necessarily in dialogue. We require language in order to create not only our articulated selves, but the inter-subjective community.

However, as H. S. Harris points out, linguistic subjectivity always means taking on an existing language as that through which one's unique being is articulated. Language allows us to articulate ourselves to others, but our 'access to the common language of the *Volk* involves *our* being dominated by those who already securely control it'.<sup>13</sup> This does not mean that we simply submit to the civil community, but it does imply that the options for self-expression and interpretation within the community – however diverse they are – reflect community-specific linguistic terms and forms. Each of us expresses our individual selves in language, but in

the language of some community, with its own grammar, lexicon, habits, accepted predications, etc., and these possibilities for self-expression are not necessarily those of other communities. In short, we seek universal recognition through language, but our language is only understandable by some others, and its concepts and structures are not necessarily shared by all. Thus, the language through which we communicate is no more determinately universal than the 'set of customs and traditions common to all who use[d] the [ancient] Greek language'.<sup>44</sup> It is, of course, just such cross-cultural misunderstandings and differences that lead to the aforementioned disagreement and challenge.

While this fact does not seem to particularly trouble Harris or Hyppolite, many others have found language's essential particularity somewhat problematic. Arguably more so than any other, Hegel claims to have developed a systematic, objective philosophy. But, like all philosophical systems, his was articulated within the language of his particular historical community. His philosophical method, it would seem, can escape neither the determining force, nor the cultural particularity, of the language in which it is expressed. Thus, as Surber<sup>45</sup> argues, Hegel's account of the necessity of communal language and inter-subjective and inter-communal dialogue has left him open to the aforementioned Metacritical challenge: that is, that philosophy is always distorted by the contingent language in which it must be expressed, and can therefore make no claims to objective necessity.<sup>46</sup> It is thus to the problem that linguistic contingency poses to philosophy that we must now turn.

### **Language in relation to the system**

The problem, then, is that Hegel claims to develop a systematic philosophy whose deduction is objectively necessary, but which can only be articulated in a contingent language. This problem primarily haunts logic, or the science of pure thinking, because this aspect of his thought seems to leave no room for anything historically, subjectively, or culturally contingent. Burbidge articulates the problem succinctly:

The grammar and vocabulary of each language has been conditioned by the contingent features of history and its geographical context. Because each nation has its unique tradition, the connotations and associations of terms are culturally specific. If thought is [expressed in contingent language] it will be affected by that contingency. Rather than transcending particular expressions and establishing an inherent necessity, then, it will simply articulate a relative world view.<sup>47</sup>



This general view of the relation of language to philosophy unites many of the so-called 'left-wing' Hegelians.<sup>48</sup> Mure, for example, argues that 'philosophical thought is an incomplete synthesis of language with thought' because each particular language is both too rigid in its commonly accepted expressions, and too flexible in its unconscious symbolic and emotive qualities to come under the full control of thinking.<sup>49</sup> Clark, pursuing the same line of thought, argues that the stubbornly 'resisting language' in which thought must receive expression should be understood on the analogy of nature; that is, language is too lifeless and rigid to adequately express the freedom of pure thinking.<sup>50</sup> However, Clark mitigates this by arguing that language and thinking form a 'speculative unity' of opposites, and thus the seeming problem of language amounts to yet one more example of Hegelian 'identity-indifference'. In short, because language 'is the *other* of thought, and yet no less the other *of* thought', it does not so much pose a problem as illustrate the basic principle of Hegel's method.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, because thought exists in unity with language, it always remains prey to the distortions that language's rigidity imposes upon it, and thus the completion of Hegel's system remains difficult, and perhaps impossible, to grasp. Simon, in a similar vein, argues that, because thought must be expressed in language, it necessarily undergoes a 'dissimulation' (*Verstellung*) into a rigid set of representational terms.<sup>52</sup> However, because thought is pure negativity, and lacks positive content, it is only determinate when so dissimulated. Thus we can trace the necessary dialectical movement of pure, negative thought and dissimulative language, but cannot determine the universal forms of thinking. Hyppolite agrees that the passage from the necessary and universal forms of logic to their finite, particular expression within a historical community is both 'the leading difficulty of Hegelianism' as well as 'Hegelianism's most obscure dialectical synthesis', precisely because one cannot adequately express the relation between thought and expression.<sup>53</sup> The universal necessity of thought means that it receives expression in all languages, but the historical contingency of language implies that nonetheless all expressions necessarily fall short of adequately expressing thought. Ultimately, language's essential contingency prevents thought from ever achieving adequate expression.

In short, these authors argue that language's particularity essentially blocks the possibility of writing a science of pure thinking endowed with universal necessity. This seems to imply that Hegel's claims about systematic philosophy are invalid.

Other 'left-wing' Hegelians, however, are not quite so pessimistic. Burbidge, for example, argues that familiarity with other languages can



broaden both the perspective of thinking as well as its expression (e.g. in the way different translations shed light on a philosophical text). The accumulation of languages produces an ever-increasing universality by abstracting us from our individual and cultural particularity, enabling us 'to transcend [our language's] particular limitations and move towards the explicitly universal'.<sup>54</sup> This, however, would seem to require that the logician learn all languages and dialects in order to ensure that the immanent development of pure thinking is free of the taint of contingency, and even then thought could always be proven to be particular by the creation of a new dialect, etc. Conversely, it leaves open the charge that the immanent development of logic in fact expresses nothing more than what Hegel gleaned from his own linguistic education, and thus is not objectively necessary.

Given not just Hegel's many claims regarding the necessary development of pure thought, but the fairly convincing appearance of an immanent conceptual development in his *Logic*, these 'left-wing' readings are unsatisfying to many Hegelians. These 'right-wing' Hegelians, however, must explain how thought can maintain its necessity even though it requires linguistic expression. Winfield argues that, while it may be true that 'language may have [been] established in the practice of an historically determined linguistic community', it nevertheless 'is and must be such as to allow any of its speakers to create new meanings they choose without violating grammatical rules or current usage'.<sup>55</sup> He argues that language allows for (or, more accurately, *must* allow for) thought's free expression simply by virtue of being the active creation of ideal minds. However, if thought is limited in its expression not only by surface grammar, but by conventional (i.e. historically contingent and fixed) usage, it is hard to see the ground for arguing that language's 'reference is freely determined by intelligence itself'.<sup>56</sup> Winfield, it would seem, merely asserts the 'right-wing' view that thought must receive adequate expression in language without fully appreciating the nature of the 'left-wing' charge of linguistic contingency.

W. Marx,<sup>57</sup> recognizing more clearly the power of that charge, argues that because thought has no other available means of expression, it must *force* contingent language to bear philosophical content. He contends that thought, as the ideal power to transform otherness into itself, necessarily has the power to 'stamp' or 'mint' (*prägen*) communal words into expressions of pure thought. Pure thought can and must transform everyday, contingent language into a medium completely of its own devising by emptying words of their conventional meanings so that new meanings can be imported to them, allowing words to be freely arranged by mind

in conceptually determined expressive chains. In other words, thought can create the medium for its free expression by transforming the lexicon of a culture into the freely ordered terms of logical expression. Language, through this process, is transformed from an impediment into the 'servant' of thought.<sup>58</sup> While he admits that natural language possesses a certain 'stubbornness' in that it retains a residue of pre-existent determination which always allows for misinterpretation, he holds this fact to be 'unimportant' for philosophy.<sup>59</sup>

Bodammer locates these 'servant' names in Hegel's discussion of 'names as such' in the 'Mechanical Memory' section of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. Hegel describes names as such as 'senseless words [*sinnloser Worte*]' which mind internalizes as discrete units. Bodammer interprets Hegel as calling for mind to 'kick name and meaning apart from each other [*treten Name und Bedeutung ... auseinander*]',<sup>60</sup> producing 'empty names'<sup>61</sup> that are completely neutral and which consequently can be given new meaning freely by thought. Like Marx, Bodammer claims that these newly determined words are then arranged by mind freely into expressions of pure thinking. Logical thought can only be adequately expressed if it creates new meanings for the words it arranges into its system, and if these words bear any resemblance to cultural usage, this fact is 'uninteresting' to pure thought.<sup>62</sup> For the right-wing, then, thought is saved from contingency by being expressed in an objective language purified of its contingent connections to the historical language of a community.

As McCumber<sup>63</sup> points out, however, because the words through which Hegel expresses his thought are the words of the German language, it is difficult to see what it means to claim that names as such lie *completely* under the sway of thought and can be understood in *complete indifference* to their communal usage. It would seem to imply that key Hegelian concepts like '*Gewesen*', '*Urteil*' and '*Begriff*' could have been equally expressed by any words whatsoever that thought chose to 'mint', (e.g. 'Phish', 'Jeddah' and '*Anschauung*') and that it would make no difference to thought's expression. Such a conclusion appears manifestly absurd, and contradicts Hegel's repeated demand for philosophy to express itself within natural language.

This failed attempt philosophy makes to escape linguistic contingency through an 'altered' language grounds many critiques of Hegel's thought. Derbolav, for example, argues that Hegel 'merely sets against the one-sidedness of Hamann ... another one-sidedness' of a language too greatly 'immobilized' into 'scientific forms of expression'.<sup>64</sup> As such, Hegel fails to do justice to the non-scientific, less theoretical aspects of language and the problems they introduce to philosophical expression. Derrida

famously focuses on the logical and historical blunders into which Hegel falls while trying to liberate the purity of thought from the determining sensuousness of language.<sup>65</sup> However, while he argues that the determining aspects of language cannot simply be eradicated from language, as Hegel's system would seem to require, he also holds that the demand for such eradication cannot be entirely eliminated. Language is an externality that contingently determines thought but only because thought essentially requires adequate expression. Thus, language and thought are inseparably bound up in a duality whose unity is always expected but nonetheless incessantly deferred. Whatever the value of these critiques as readings of Hegel, they point to devastating flaws in the right-wing reading of language as that which pure thought must transform and control without remainder.

In sum, then, there is a left/right split amongst commentators on Hegel and language, the dividing line of which concerns the possibility of the complete and adequate expression of pure thought. As Winfield puts it:

There is no other alternative but this: either the validity of thought is conditioned by language . . . in which case neither [pure thought] nor anything else could be known with any authority, or the truth of thinking is utterly unlimited by ... the medium ... which ... expresses [it].<sup>66</sup>

The first (left-wing) alternative implies that thought's objectivity is always contaminated (to greater or lesser degrees) by the language in which it is expressed, and thus Hegel cannot succeed in the task he sets for himself. The second (right-wing) possibility is left with the difficult task of explaining how language can be transformed into the servant of thought while remaining expressive to any reader, or conversely how language that remains expressive to a community can be determined as free of linguistic contingency.

McCumber attempts to bridge the 'left/right' divide by arguing for the existence of two necessary, yet opposed 'linguistic media', each of which is required for the expression of thought: 'representational language', or the philosophic terms of the acquired language of a community affirmed by the Hegelian left,<sup>67</sup> and 'names as such', or the artificial, servant terminology demanded by the Hegelian right. While each medium is deficient on its own for the reasons cited above, McCumber argues that they are sufficient *together* for expressing thought because the latter is completely determined by thought alone, while the former is understandable by a community and can be translated



into other languages. Thought is expressed through words that have been emptied of meaning and determined solely by thought, but which nevertheless retain a *homophonic* relation with their respective representational names. Were the words in which the system receives expression merely representative, they would be open to the charge of linguistic contingency; however, if they bore no relation to the words of representational language, they would not be expressive to a community. Thus, with the right McCumber holds that thought strips representative words of all meaning and determines them according to its immanent content, but addressing the concerns of the left, contends that thought only chooses 'appropriate' words for this task.<sup>68</sup> A representative word is appropriate for being transformed by thought because of the 'meaning, [or] the specific representation it signifies'.<sup>69</sup> Thought, then, is restricted as to which names as such it can create, since they must all sound like representational words with identical meanings (e.g. it empties and determines '*Begriff*' because the representational homophone bears an appropriate meaning for its use within philosophy), but thought is unlimited in its logical determination of them, since they have been divested of their conventional meanings. In other words, philosophy expresses itself in newly minted names as such created out of representational words selected by mind because they have the same meaning in representational language.

While a subtle attempt to resolve the dispute, McCumber's analysis is ultimately misguided. Firstly, it reduces thought to a set of posited definitions that are as rigid and inflexible as the representational language it merely sounds like. '*Sein*', '*Nichts*' and '*Werden*', for example, each must be stripped of their meaning, minted with new meanings by mind, and then linked in an externally imposed chain, rather than organically developing out of each other's meanings.<sup>70</sup> The words would not unfold so much as they would be computationally related to each other according to mind's determinations of them.<sup>71</sup> Logic, however, does not simply computationally produce the next term of a series, but develops organically from stage to stage according to the content of the concepts being expressed.

Moreover, if the names as such are selected for new determination because their old representational determination has the appropriate meaning, then the two appear to be not simply homophones, but synonyms. Because Hegel defines the sign as a unity of external signifier and internal meaning, the two media are therefore indistinguishable. In reading Hegel, one could never be sure whether or not a name as such or a representational name was being used because each would be

expressed by the same sound/meaning unity. In fact, the recognition of a name as such would require us to abstract from the word's 'usual' sense (say, in the sentences one reads in the *Logic*) and posit another, computational one to it. Thus, McCumber's reading simply posits a set of abstractions from representational language that are arranged according to the imposed determinations of a thought external to them. As such, McCumber ultimately ends up back on the right, and falls prey to the same problem of communicability.

Nancy, too, argues that philosophy's rigour would appear to demand 'the pushing aside of the bad [i.e. representational] lexicon before the production of the "good" [i.e. "philosophical"] one'.<sup>72</sup> He also recognizes, however, that, in order to be meaningful, the 'language of philosophy ... will not be another language' but (some version of) natural language.<sup>73</sup> Philosophy must be expressed within representational language, but one must be wary of which words one uses in its expression. Thus, Nancy avoids McCumber's difficulties by focusing on the relatively small number of 'speculative words' drawn from natural language that Hegel utilizes in his texts. These are the words that – by happy coincidence – approximate the speculative, dialectical nature of thinking (*aufheben*, *Sinn*, etc.). These words, precisely because of their contradictory meanings, stand opposed to the habitual mechanisms of natural language (which cannot admit of dual senses in terms), and thus can be lifted out of its historically contingent structures and employed to express the dialectical nature of thinking. As Nancy correctly notes, such speculative words reveal the opposition of free thought to the rigidity present in natural language and point to a kind of language beyond natural language. However, Nancy articulates the method in which such names are appropriated by philosophy as similar to the process through which names as such are created in McCumber's account. Thus, Nancy argues that names as such can become the 'good' lexicon of philosophy, but only in so far as they have been recognized as being self-opposed within representational language and therefore as already speculative. These names, when emptied of all their relations within natural language, can be related to each other according to the speculative nature of thought. While Nancy recognizes that the 'good' terms remain homophonic synonyms of the 'bad', he nonetheless contends that the philosopher remains free to exploit the happy chances found within natural language in order to express dialectical thought.

However, while this may avoid the problem of relating names as such to representational names, it does not allow thought to escape linguistic contingency. Because speculative words only 'approximate' the dialectic,

and do so because of their meanings in natural language, the sublation of them into philosophical discourse can never be complete. Hegel's *Logic*, or the 'body of thought' developed by pure thought thinking itself, can only be expressed in words that *contingently* approximate its method, and thus 'because the speculative spirit [present in] language is contingent [that] also means that the "body of thought" itself is contingent'.<sup>74</sup> Thus pure thought always risks contamination by the determinations present within natural language (metaphorical connections, puns, propositional orders, etc.). One can never be certain that speculative words are being understood speculatively, rather than merely in one of their 'natural' senses, or as a bad pun based on its wordplay.

In fact, philosophy exposes chance elements as present within language; chance elements that prevent its connections from ever becoming rigidly determined. Philosophy's exposure of the speculative elements in language is the exposure of the slippages between words that dissolve all attempts at firm definitions or determinately meaningful relations holding between terms, in philosophy or otherwise. The speculative appropriation of language is the affirmation and expression of the incessant deforming of all linguistic forms and de-significations of all meanings. Thus, for Nancy philosophy's expression amounts to the 'infinite exhaustion and alteration of language' which merely 'articulates things in the play of their differences'.<sup>75</sup> As such, his account denies the possibility of universal or necessary forms of thought, affirming only the reciprocal contamination of logic and language.

Thus, just as McCumber's twin linguistic media wind up back on the right, Nancy's speculative lexicon winds up back on the left, and neither of them resolves the issues raised by the left/right split. Nonetheless, this dispute cannot remain unresolved, as it threatens not only the validity of Hegel's system, but the very possibility of philosophy itself. Philosophy must account for its expression within language, and the contingent languages that we acquire must allow for the determination of necessary, universal forms of thinking. As of yet, no commentary has managed to resolve the left/right divide. It is my contention that Hegel's theory of language, properly read, evades these problems by demonstrating that the necessary and universal form of grammar can be deduced within any and all contingent communal languages. That is, Hegel's philosophy determines both the necessity of universal forms through contingent languages, and the necessity of contingent languages through universal forms. It is this speculative unity of linguistic form and content that philosophy must express. The demonstration of this theory is the burden of this book.



**Weaknesses in the existent scholarship**

(1) Commentaries tend to be weak on the acquisition of language. While many commentators (e.g., McCumber, Cook, Bodammer) investigate Hegel's account of sign-formation, rarely is the dialectical progress between pre-linguistic intuition and full linguistic capacity rigorously investigated. Chapter 2 details this process of lexical acquisition.

(2) The existent readings are almost entirely devoid of serious investigation regarding the role that grammar plays in Hegel's theory of language. Schmidt<sup>76</sup> argues that Hegel offers a mere psychology of signs, as opposed to a theory of language, because he failed to incorporate the grammatical discoveries of contemporary comparative linguistics into his theory of language. McCumber argues that neither 'linguistic media' through which thought expresses itself is grammatically structured. On the one hand, the set of representational words from which names as such are drawn 'lacks syntax and grammar: it is a vocabulary, rather than a true language'.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, names as such must be free from the constraints of natural language, and as such 'are not bound to fixed grammars'.<sup>78</sup> Thus, grammar appears to be part of 'language', but not part of either philosophical language or the representational lexicon from which the former is drawn. Burbidge and Winfield, as we have seen, identify grammar solely as the surface grammar of a language, thus consigning it, as Kant did, to the realm of historical and cultural contingency. Gadamer similarly argues that the 'correspondence between logic and grammar' identified by Hegel unjustly ignores 'the differences between languages and their grammatical bases'.<sup>79</sup>

Houlgate is truer to Hegel in arguing that an understanding of grammar facilitates an understanding of the 'formal relations between words' as these formal relations are 'based on [the] universal categorial functions' of logic.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, he immediately undermines this by claiming that the 'relations between the signs and words of a language which determine [their] specific function ... with respect to each other ... are distinct from logical relations' and can even 'obscure' the logical relations present.<sup>81</sup> Thus, grammar is, again, relegated to the contingent specificity of language, and deemed to be in need of no further investigation. Nancy similarly argues that, while 'it is certainly not impossible to reconstitute, through the texts, a short treatise of Hegelian grammar, [grammar nonetheless] has no assigned [systematic] place and ... might in fact hinder the system'.<sup>82</sup> DeVries<sup>83</sup> argues that the grammar present in language is simply an extension of our ability to order intuition into coherent experiences, and thus is simply subsumed under logic, and stands in need of

no independent elaboration and is not reciprocally enlightening. Thus, grammar is either subsumed under 'language' as particular or 'logic' as universal, and in neither case is it seriously investigated as a topic in the philosophy of language. I undertake this investigation in Chapter 3.

(3) The existent readings tend to deny the possibility of developing anything approaching a general theory of language through Hegel's texts. Cook, while admitting a progression of linguistic consciousness throughout Hegel's writings, argues that it 'would be wrong, however, to say that Hegel had a developed philosophy of language [because] he never systematically presents his ideas on language'.<sup>84</sup> Derrida, admitting that 'the lineaments of a linguistics are indicated' in Hegel's *Encyclopaedia*, nevertheless claims that Hegel 'goes no further' in its development than mere hints.<sup>85</sup> Surber claims that, while 'Hegel fully acknowledged language as presenting a central issue [i.e. the problem of language's contingency] to be confronted by systematic philosophy [he nonetheless] failed to arrive at any entirely stable position with respect to it'.<sup>86</sup> In order to reconcile thought with the contingency of language:

Hegel would have to extend his discussion of language to include linguistic (grammatical) structures as somehow related to and expressive of the conceptual (logical) relations which are the driving force of his systematic thought [and] no response to this question directly involving linguistic considerations seems forthcoming in the context of Hegel's systematic exposition.<sup>87</sup>

What I hope this review of the literature makes clear is that Hegel's thought, which directs our attention to the challenge of linguistic contingency, can only survive this challenge if his texts provide accounts of the acquisition of a contingent communal language, its universal grammatical structure, and the systematic interrelation of a contingent language and its necessary form. In other words, Hegelian philosophy demands the development of Hegelian philosophy of language. Anything short of this not only fails to explain the place of language within Hegel's philosophy, but leaves his philosophy open to the respective charges (and flaws) of the Hegelian left or right. On my reading, such a theory of language *can* be developed out of Hegel's *Logik* and *Geist* texts as the dialectic between a necessary, universal grammar and a contingent, particular language. In the next chapter, through a close reading of his explicit remarks on the relationship between language learning and philosophical pedagogy, I will argue that Hegel himself articulates precisely this framework for developing his philosophy of language.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the  
 various methods which have been proposed for the determination  
 of the rate of reaction. The most common of these is the  
 method of initial rates, in which the initial rate of reaction  
 is determined from the slope of the tangent to the curve at the  
 origin. This method is simple and convenient, but it is not  
 very accurate, especially when the reaction is slow. A more  
 accurate method is the method of integrated rate laws, in which  
 the rate of reaction is determined from the slope of the curve  
 at a particular time. This method is more complicated, but it  
 is more accurate. The third method is the method of half-  
 lives, in which the half-life of the reaction is determined from  
 the time taken for the concentration of the reactant to fall to  
 half its initial value. This method is also simple and convenient,  
 but it is not very accurate. The fourth method is the method  
 of continuous monitoring, in which the concentration of the  
 reactant is monitored continuously during the reaction. This  
 method is the most accurate, but it is also the most complicated.  
 The choice of method depends on the nature of the reaction and  
 the accuracy required.

In the second part of the paper, the effect of temperature on the  
 rate of reaction is discussed. It is found that the rate of reaction  
 increases with increasing temperature. This is due to the fact  
 that the molecules have more energy at higher temperatures, and  
 therefore they are more likely to collide with sufficient energy  
 to overcome the activation energy barrier. The effect of temperature  
 on the rate of reaction can be quantified by the Arrhenius equation,  
 which relates the rate constant to the activation energy and the  
 temperature. The Arrhenius equation is given by:  

$$k = A e^{-E_a/RT}$$
 where  $k$  is the rate constant,  $A$  is the pre-exponential factor,  
 $E_a$  is the activation energy,  $R$  is the gas constant, and  $T$  is the  
 absolute temperature. The Arrhenius equation can be used to  
 determine the activation energy of a reaction, and it can also be  
 used to predict the rate of reaction at different temperatures.



## Chapter 1

# The Framework of Hegelian Linguistics

The burden of this chapter is to demonstrate the existence of a framework within Hegel's work for developing a schematic philosophy of language. While it is true that Hegel never articulates an explicit theory of language, I contend that the virtual ubiquity of linguistic elements throughout his works provides ample materials for developing such a theory.<sup>1</sup> In other words, if the various parts of language enjoy consistent analyses across the different texts in which they arise, then Hegel's corpus may present an implicit philosophy of language. By relating the parts of language to each other through the works in which they arise, then, specifically Hegelian linguistic relations can be developed.

To start, I will follow one linguistic path laid out by Hegel – that of grammar – and, rather than accepting the borders of any individual text or temporal period, I will follow it where it leads.<sup>2</sup> Thus, I shall be drawing together texts from diverse aspects of Hegel's academic life. This may initially appear to be problematic, in that Hegel's investigative focus is different across his texts and some of his central concepts change significantly over time. However, any investigation of Hegel's theory of language will require at least some use of disparate texts, owing both to the diffusion of his many brief comments concerning language and the significant time lapse between his few explicit analyses. Those who care to investigate Hegel and language must utilize all available resources, lest they forgo valuable tools that more traditional styles of commentary would preclude. Exploiting language's ubiquity, of course, should never mean abusing it. Any connection between texts requires the demonstration of an immanent conceptual continuity. It is such continuity that I hope has guided my text selection here.

## Grammar and Logic

In Hegel's works, grammar consistently arises as a tool for explicating the nature of, defending the importance of, and providing ideal instruction

in, the categories and relations of logic. Thus, we shall begin our investigation of Hegel's account of grammar with a brief look at Hegel's idea of logic, at least in so far as the latter implicates the former.

In introducing his *Science of Logic* Hegel is primarily concerned with differentiating his conception of logic from that held by ordinary, 'picture-thinking' consciousness. Despite the fact that his *Phenomenology* has already demonstrated the necessity of the pure science of thought as the liberation from the contradictions that determine ordinary thinking, Hegel takes special care, here, 'to make more accessible to picture thinking [*Vorstellungen*] the point of view from which [logic] is to be considered' (W5, p. 36/SL, p. 43, trans. mod.). Thus, while the *Logic* in one sense presupposes the *Phenomenology*'s famous conclusion, in another sense it is simply a pedagogical text in logic for those still dominated by ordinary thinking.

According to Hegel, ordinary thinking conceives of logic as the 'mere form of cognition' (W5, p. 36/SL, p. 43) abstracted from any particular content or material. The rules of logic govern only the subjective act of thinking, while the object or content of thought is presumed to be objectively 'present on its own account as a ready-made world apart from thought' (W5, p. 36/SL, p. 44). Thinking is an intrinsically empty form, irreducibly external to the 'real' world and it is only through the aid of this 'real' content that abstract thinking is able to become actual knowing by, at best, conforming to its ready-made content or, at worst, to the mere appearance of it. Thus, picture thinking consigns logic to a realm of abstraction that is irreducibly external to the 'real' realm of experience. Much to his dismay, Hegel finds that this picture of logic has come to dominate not only ordinary consciousness, but philosophy as well. However, it has overcome philosophy only recently, in the modern era. Ancient philosophers had a 'higher conception of thinking', holding it to be the objective 'essence' of contingent objects (W5, p. 38/SL, p. 45, trans. mod.). For the ancients, thinking and its object were 'one and the same content' (W5, p. 38/SL, p. 45) and a solid grasp of the forms of thinking was requisite to genuine knowledge of the world.

Things are quite different, however, for modern philosophy, which has reduced logic to a 'completely analytical procedure and mechanical [*begriffloses*] calculation' (W5, pp. 47–48/SL, p. 52) external to its content. Conceived as a pure abstraction lacking the vivacity and utility of the empirical sciences, logic, pedagogically speaking:

May be said to have fallen into contempt. It is still dragged in, [but] more from the feeling that one cannot dispense with logic altogether

and because the tradition of its importance still survives, rather than from a conviction that ... occupation with its empty forms is valuable and useful. (W5, p. 46/SL, p. 52)

Such are the modern prejudices which 'bar the entrance to philosophy' (W5, p. 38/SL, p. 45). The business of philosophy, according to Hegel, is the lifting of this bar.

Philosophy, however, cannot conduct its business merely by returning to the views of the ancients. While it is true that, in comparison, the contemporary abstraction 'appears as a loss and a retrograde step, [it in fact] is based on something more profound on which rests the elevation of reason into the loftier spirit of modern philosophy' (W5, p. 38-39/SL, p. 46). Reflective understanding is the separation of the thought of the thing and the thing thought that brings the ancient immediate unity of form and content into necessary contradiction. According to Hegel, this is the great insight achieved by reflection. Thus, philosophy must include, within itself, the necessary contradiction realized in modernity.

As the deduction of the *Phenomenology*, however, pure thinking no less presupposes the liberation of consciousness from the oppositions of reflective understanding and the necessary unity of thought and its object. Thus, in an era both dominated by reflective picture thinking and in which the *Phenomenology's* deduction has already occurred, the scientific and pedagogical value of logic can be neither naturally assumed, nor 'reflectively' eradicated. One can neither hold logic to be a merely external form of thought (as ordinary consciousness considers it), nor simply restore thinking to an immediate unity with its content (as the *Phenomenology's* deduction appears to permit). If the nature and value of pure thinking is to be explicitly determined, then logic must be developed in segregation from its possible extension into, or unity with, the realm of content. Logic must be developed according to its own principle, in itself, for its development to be free and complete. This isolated development is, of course, what the *Logic* is intended to be. Thus, the *Logic* not only serves as an immanent reconstruction of the forms of thinking; it is also a text of formative *Bildung* that teaches the picture-thinking student to 'practice abstract thinking' (W5, p. 53/SL, p. 56). This thinking breaks with the immediacy of the empirical and enables the student to cognize by means of the abstract categories necessary for genuine philosophical thinking.

However, within this account of logical *Bildung*, an obvious problem arises. If contemporary individuals are held fast in the illusions of reflective understanding, they will clearly not yet have overcome the separation of form and content. For them, logic will retain the appearance



of 'an isolated system of abstractions which, confined within itself, does not encompass [*übergreift*] the other knowledges and sciences' (W 5, p. 54/SL, p. 57, trans. mod.). In other words, the entrance to philosophy would come, not as the liberation from reflective prejudice, but as the reinforcement of it. How can the study of logic in isolation actually liberate one from the prejudices that arise from its very abstraction?

Hegel's curious answer is that the nature and value of logic is understood differently by students at different levels of logical *Bildung*. When one first comes to logic, one will necessarily contrast it with the 'wealth of the world of [ordinary] picture thinking [*Weltvorstellung*]' and sense that in logic the living 'scope and depth and wider meaning is lacking' (W 5, p. 54/SL, pp. 57–58, trans. mod.). The empirical sciences will retain their vividness and utility and logic will appear as external and empty. However, 'it is something else when one comes back to it from [those sciences]' (W 5, p. 53/SL, p. 57). In the achievement of a 'deeper knowledge [*tiefern Kenntniß*]' of the more 'concrete' studies, logic 'raises itself up [*erhebt sich*]' and reveals itself as the universal content of both the sciences and the world they investigate (W 5, p. 54/SL, p. 58, trans. mod.). Logic only reveals itself as the essence of things when one returns to it out of a deep mastery of the other sciences.

To make this pedagogical relationship between the individual and logical education clearer, Hegel draws a structural analogy between the study of logic and that of grammar. As with the student of logic, whoever begins to get acquainted with grammar finds:

[In its] forms and laws dry abstractions, arbitrary rules, [and] in general an isolated collection of definitions and terms which exhibit only the value and significance of what is implied in their immediate meaning; there is nothing to be known in them other than themselves. (W 5, p. 53/SL, p. 57)

Since the foil for grammar, like that of logic, must appear as ready-made to the individual, to round out the analogy we must assume grammar to be 'abstracted' from the student's natural language as that is the most immediate and useful of linguistic contents. Natural language makes grammar appear as a contrived set of abstract generalities from what is already expressed in a full and meaningful way.

However, claims Hegel:

On the other hand, whoever has mastered a language [*einer Sprache mächtig ist*] and at the same time knows other languages in comparison

with it, *he alone* can make himself feel the spirit and culture of a people through the grammar of its language [*kann sich der Geist und die Bildung eines Volks in der Grammatik seiner Sprache zu fühlen geben*]; now, the same rules and forms have a substantial, living power. (W 5, p. 53/SL, p. 57, trans. mod.)

Thus, like the student of logic, the new grammarian finds herself immersed in something seemingly ready-made in comparison to which her study-matter appears as an external abstraction. However, after both 'mastering' her own tongue and completing some 'comparative' study of other languages, she can return to them and find the universal form that essentially structures all languages. Grammar is universal across all languages and only a combination of study in languages not our own and some special kind of mastery of our natural tongue can bring this to our consciousness.

Clearly, however, formal grammatical study is not the only way in which individuals come to have knowledge of multiple languages. Many children are raised speaking several languages, thus existing within a 'ready-made' world of comparative linguistic knowledge. Moreover, seemingly masterful competence in one's natural language is a universal trait of humanity, despite the fact that most people never encounter anything like formal grammatical training. Many individuals have conversational or reading knowledge of different languages, as well as full speaking/hearing ability within their own without ever confronting even basic concepts like the 'subject' and 'predicate', let alone the 'passive voice' or 'subjunctive mood'. Moreover, some grammatical categories and rules (the continuous tense, separable prefixes, etc.) are present in some language families but not others. Thus, Hegel cannot be claiming that any knowledge of one's own tongue, or even two or more languages, allows us to see the universality of grammar, with or without grammatical study. Furthermore, by 'grammar' he must mean something other than the particular surface grammars of communal languages.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, Hegel must have something more in mind by 'mastery of a language' than the ideal speaking/comprehension ability which serves as the model for contemporary linguistics, and must also mean something different by 'comparative knowledge' than some version of the aforementioned abilities in a language not one's own natural tongue. Clearly the passage, with its focus on the *Bildung* of individuals, points away from the manner in which we generally speak our own language and often come to function within others towards more formal and abstract kinds of training and mastery. It is precisely this kind of language

learning that is the focus of Hegel's 1809 *Rede* on classical instruction in the *Gymnasium*.<sup>4</sup>

### Grammar and Linguistic 'Alienation'

We should not be surprised that the analogy between logic and grammar has led us back to classics. While it may seem odd to jump from the mature reflection of a great thinker upon his masterwork to the mere curriculum defence of a *Gymnasium* rector, these disparate texts are united by their common concern for the pedagogy required for true entrance into philosophy in the modern age, as well as with the relation between logical education and the study of grammar.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, as a text specifically focused on classical language instruction and its importance for the study of philosophy, the *Rede* develops the relations between logic and grammar to a much greater degree of detail than the briefer, yet strikingly similar, account in the later *Logic*. Thus, the rector's account of grammatical instruction may be the assumed background for the logician's brief analogy. If this is the case, the analogy may not be an analogy at all but an expression of a deeper relation between grammar and logic. Before we explore grammar in the *Rede*, however, let us take a brief look at Hegel's account of classical instruction in general at the time of his rectorship.

The first half of Hegel's lecture concerns the declining status of Latin and Greek in contemporary German education. In the modern age, classical study – much like logic – has been stripped of its formerly held 'dignity of being the universal and almost exclusive means of education' and now a 'universal voice raises itself against' it as essentially obsolete (W 4, p. 315). This 'point of view ... has little by little eroded [*abgesetzt*] the [longstanding] claim of the study of [classical languages] to be considered the central science' (W 4, p. 315). This objection specifically concerns the externality of the classics to the lives of German youth.

The intimacy with which our own language belongs to us is lacking in the subjects we possess only in a foreign one; these are separated from us by a partition that prevents them from truly finding a home in [our] minds. (W 4, p. 315)

The intrinsic externality of classical languages to the modern mind is a barrier between the student and whatever literary, moral and philosophical content classical instruction may contain. Genuine knowledge



can only be intimately grasped by German students if it is expressed in their natural tongue. This linguistic prejudice, coupled with the increasingly frequent degeneration of classical study 'into a generic mechanism [and/or] degraded methods' of instruction has dragged classics below the level of 'so-called matters of fact, among them everyday, sensory things' (W4, p. 315).

Thus, classical language instruction is conceived as the imposition of an external abstraction on a mind already immersed in the ready-made German language, or a mere mechanism that intrinsically lacks the vivacity and utility of the other sciences. This foreignness bars students from truly grasping whatever valuable content classical study is meant to convey. However, Hegel does not dwell upon these degraded techniques and their consequences for long.

His primary concern in discussing the crisis of classical studies is to rise above this superficial rejection and bring attention to the 'wise measures' (W4, p. 315) recently proposed within German civil education.<sup>6</sup> These proposed changes represent no mere return to former pedagogical practices, nor do they rest upon some new 'German' value being imported to classical instruction. Rather, classical training is being 'secured as the fundamental basis of learned study' precisely by stripping it of its 'exclusive character' as the central science and placing it simply 'alongside [the other] educational materials and scientific methods' (W4, p. 316).

As with logic, however, a clear problem arises. If classical instruction is no longer the exclusive pedagogical ground for the other sciences, then it will appear as an external abstraction from the more useful and immediate studies taught in German. How can it then securely hold its old position by being stripped of it? How can placing an abstract discipline in direct competition with more immediate and useful studies avoid reinforcing the prejudice against it?

As in the *Logic*, Hegel argues that it is in fact isolation from the other sciences that reinvigorates classical studies. Formerly, it was presumed that knowledge of all practical and rudimentary things was contained within classical instruction. As such, classical study was constrained by its relations with matters of fact, as it was studied only with a view to its possible extensions into the 'factual' or 'practical' sciences. In contrast, the new method of 'abstracting' classical study into its own realm within education:

[Grants it] the possibility ... to be able to develop itself [both] more freely and more completely. ... Only what makes itself completely

isolated in its own principle [*Nur was sich abgesondert in seinem Prinzip vollkommen macht*] becomes a consistent whole, i.e. it becomes *something*; it gains depth and the powerful possibility of versatility. (W 4, pp. 316–17)

Classical study for its own sake, abstracted from its possible unity with the other sciences, grants it the freedom to develop in and as itself, demonstrating the necessity, versatility and value of its content.

It is in the pronouncement of this isolating principle, however, that we encounter a curious detour in Hegel's account. Focusing as he does on the necessity of classical language instruction as a vital part of the study of classics (as opposed to works in translation) we would expect the grammatical, or some other specifically linguistic aspect to be its differentiating principle. However, the principle Hegel proposes is the 'excellence [*Vortrefflichen*]' of human spirit found in the classical age, wherein for the first time 'the paradise of human spirit ... has its depth ... lying open in free clarity' (W 4, pp. 317–18). Studying classical languages, abstracted from any immediate practicality, must first and foremost bring us into contact with the excellence of the human mind.

This detour becomes somewhat more understandable when we learn that this *Geist* stands opposed to the 'so-called practical subject matter, this sensuous material that falls immediately into the child's manner of picture thinking' (W 4, p. 319). Human excellence is found in our spiritual and mental life, and is not derived in any way from our experience of the merely practical or sensuous. As such, the excellence found in classics is 'only the content of mind [*der geistige Inhalt*]' (W 4, p. 319) itself and, as such, it is the most suitable material to train and exercise the student's mind in its own proper activities. Thus, the 'content' of classics is in fact the form of mental activity in general, which determines all knowledge and expression.

Since classical education trains and nourishes us precisely because it expresses the universality of mind itself, this 'excellence' would also necessarily find expression in our natural language. Given this, Hegel must (and does) concede that it can be approximately conveyed in translation. If this is the case, what then would necessitate ancient language study at all? If the excellence of mind expressed within classical languages is no less expressed within contemporary languages, why are we not entitled to think that:

The culture of the modern world, our enlightenment and the progress

of all the arts and sciences ... have surpassed their Greek and Roman infancy, and outgrown their old leading strings [and] can now walk upon their own land? (W4, p. 317)

Hegel's answer is that education is not merely a matter of content; it is also a matter of form. Training in excellence is not the digestion of certain pedagogically necessary facts and ideas. It is primarily the exercise and development of the form of thinking. Thus, having 'spoken about the *material* [*Stoffe*] of [classical language] education', we must now 'say a few words about the *formal element* [*das Formelle*] which lies in its nature' (W4, p. 320).

What classical instruction conveys is the universality of mind which, as such, is what is most immediate to us. However, precisely as immediate, this excellence cannot be recognized as the universal form of mind. The universality of mind cannot be grasped when translated into our mother tongue for the simple reason that we are immediately 'at home' in the particular expressions of the latter. While the excellence of mind is itself universal, we find it presented within, and understand it as, a particular natural expression. Because it is precisely our immediate 'at home-ness' in our mother tongue that prevents us from grasping the universality contained in its particular expressions, in order to make our universal mind explicit to ourselves we must become foreign to ourselves by confronting the expression of mind as something external. If education is the training and development of the mind, then central to this training is mind's 'separation from its natural essence and condition, which [mind] itself seeks [*die Scheidung, die sie von ihrem natürlich Wesen und Zustand sucht*]' (W4, p. 321). In other words, we must confront our own mind as an external abstraction.

The 'partition ... through which this separation ... is achieved', Hegel claims, 'is the world and language of the ancients', which, as sufficiently remote and alien to us, 'separates us from ourselves' (W4, p. 321).<sup>7</sup> In translation, however, this alien world speaks to us in an all too familiar way. Thus, truly enacting the 'universal necessity' of estrangement within educational development requires learning 'the [ancient] world of idea[s] [*die Welt der Vorstellung*] as well as their language' (W4, p. 322, my emphasis). Confronting our own mental form in a completely foreign language alienates us from ourselves in an uncannily vivid fashion.

As a confrontation with our own (form of) mind in a remote and alien tongue, classical study requires a certain abstract, 'mechanical' learning. These mechanical elements would, presumably, include the dry, rote



memorization of vocabulary. However, Hegel focuses here on the fact that 'the mechanical moments [*mechanischen Momente*] in language learning are immediately connected with *grammatical study* [*grammatische Studium*], whose value cannot be rated highly enough' (W 4, p. 322). At first, this high estimation of grammatical study seems odd since one's natural language is intrinsically grammatical and thus the learning of one's own language would constitute some manner of grammatical learning. Hegel even acknowledges that grammar is a central pedagogical concern for German instruction. What, then, is particular to grammar that intimately relates it to the alienation necessary for learning? Moreover, how does grammatical training relate specifically to grasping the universality of mind?

Hegel defines grammar as 'the categories [and] characteristic products and determinations of the understanding' (W 4, p. 322). In other words, (at least some of) the formal concepts and relations of our thinking mind *are* the concepts of grammar. This is partially evinced by the fact that some specific grammatical categories are universal across time and culture, a fact we are confronted with in learning ancient languages.<sup>8</sup> These universal grammatical forms are the universal forms of thinking, which '*are in us* because understanding is our essence' (W 4, p. 323) and which find immediate expression in the various natural languages of individuals. What Hegel means by grammar, then, are the universal forms of determinate thought that find expression in all natural languages.

Because grammatical concepts are what are expressed in our natural language we understand them immediately, that is as particular expressions. However, the fact that we speak grammatically and/or correctly interpret the expressions of others does not demonstrate knowledge of the *universal* grammar which concerns Hegel. To the contrary, a proper employment of any 'surface' grammatical rule (e.g. correctly gendering our German substantives, etc.) is, like any lexical expression, a particular expression for a particular culture. It is understood as expressing a particular idea, rather than a universal category or relation of thinking. In short, particular expressions cover over the universal grammatical relations that they express. Abstract grammatical study allows us to grasp the universal categories (e.g. the substantive, the predicating verb)<sup>9</sup> and their immanent relations in themselves, according to their own principle.

This formal study, Hegel claims, is achieved in its most perfect form in 'grammatical study of an *ancient* language' (W 4, p. 323). In contrast to formal training in German, or even in living foreign languages

like French, the study of a dead tongue never allows 'unreflective habit [to lead] us to bring about the right coincidence of words [*die richtige Wortfügung herbeiführt*]' (W 4, p. 323). When reading works in an ancient language, 'it is necessary to keep in view the significance of the parts of speech determined by the understanding, and call to [one's] aid the rules of their combination' (W 4, p. 323). While one can imagine (and may even know) classicists with a facility to read Latin and Greek as well as their native tongue, we need not share Hegel's bias towards the classics to grasp the essential thrust of his argument. Negotiating our way through a language made sufficiently alien to us prevents us from finding ourselves at home therein and forces upon us the double process of the 'perpetual subsuming of the particular under the universal and the particularization of the universals' (W 4, p. 323).

This process marks the 'mechanical' aspect of language learning, since it involves bringing radically separate parts of language together abstractly, according to a seemingly foreign form. In an alien language, we must constantly recall and apply the forms through which individual words are brought together to form a complete expression, as we lack the more 'natural' processes of habit, meaning, etc. that usually organically guide us to speak or read meaningfully. It is through this process that the universal concepts and relations of grammatical mind are grasped in their necessity and versatility, allowing us to recognize and concretize them in particular expressions.

Thus, the mechanical study of language as alien allows us find ourselves at home in the realm of abstraction, as it is through this process that we can determine, grasp and utilize the universal concepts and relations of grammatical mind as the power and value that forms particular expressions. In short, grammatical study 'constitutes the beginning of logical education' by teaching us to discover and apply the pure forms of determinate thinking, and thus can be 'considered elementary philosophy' in that it makes us confront the perpetual subsumption and concretion of universals and particulars 'in which the form of reason's activity exists' (W 4, pp. 322-23).

### The Framework of Hegel's Philosophy of Language

What is the import of this analysis for the development of Hegel's theory of language? The path of grammar reveals to us the framework for developing a general philosophy of language through the dialectic of

linguistic form and content. Language is phenomenally experienced as the 'natural' languages of particular communities which, as Hegel puts it in the *Encyclopaedia*, constitute the content, or 'material (lexical) element [*das Material (das Lexikalische)*]' (W 10, §459) of language. Within the meaningful use of these lexicons, the universal categories and relations that structure them are concealed from us in the immediacy of natural expression. This lexical, material element is sensuous and particular, rather than abstract and universal, and can only be studied as such. Thus, it is in the *Geist* works (i.e. the *Phenomenology* and, especially, the *Philosophy of Mind*) that we must turn to seek an account of the 'content' side of language, for it is precisely these texts that address our experience and knowledge of particular sensuous materials, communal life, etc. This analysis will ultimately demand a confrontation with language as alienating, mechanical and abstract revealing the concealment of the pure, universal 'form (grammar)' (W 10, §459) of determinate thought within linguistic expression. This 'formal element of language is the work of the understanding which imparts its categories into [language]' (W 10, §459). These formal categories of thinking, however, will necessarily appear as abstractions without substantial existence. It is in the *Logic* that we must seek an account of these 'abstract' concepts developed according to their own principle.

If language consists of a material, particular lexicon and a formal, universal grammar, then Hegel's philosophy of language must make both their opposition and unity explicit. The immediate unity of lexical content and its logical grammar must be dissolved into a reflected dichotomy, and thus each must be developed in isolation according to its own principle. No less, however, does this opposition demand synthesis, and it is only through such a synthesis that an explicitly Hegelian philosophy of language can be completed. It is not enough to inhabit and utilize a lexicon that manages to express mental ideas to others, nor is it sufficient to determinately catalogue all the universal grammatical categories and relations that are transformed into expressive content. To explain how language functions as a sensuous expression of thought, we must systematically determine the manner in which particular words are determined by universal relations, as well as how logical categories are concretized into material expressions. To do so, we shall have to relate *Geist* and *Logik* to each other *on linguistic terms*. To relate the relevant texts to each other through their linguistic elements would be to develop an explicitly Hegelian philosophy of language. Thus, Hegel's account of grammatical instruction reveals to us a framework for developing a general theory of language out of



Hegel's work. Of course, I do not pretend, here, to have defended the theory itself. The validity of such a theory can only be demonstrated by its actual development. Thus, it is to that work which we now must turn.

## Chapter 2

# The Acquisition of Lexical Content

The problem of beginning in Hegel is always a vexed one and the analysis of language we are about to undertake will naturally fall prey to it. The first term of Hegelian linguistics – lexical content – receives its most detailed discussion in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, so it is obvious enough which text should receive our focus. However, both the place of language within that text and the role of the text within Hegel's system pose certain difficulties for beginning our investigation.

First, we should note that while the *Philosophy of Mind*, like the earlier *Phenomenology*, deals with the nature of *Geist*, it (at least in the sections that concern us, on 'Subjective Spirit') presents a more focused account of the development of individual consciousness<sup>1</sup> than that of the *Phenomenology*, which simultaneously accounts for individual consciousness and world historical consciousness. As a result, some of the movements made in the *Encyclopaedia* are markedly different from the more famous *Phenomenology* versions. In fact, while there are often analogous passages in the *Phenomenology*, the stages that concern us (representation, imagination, memory, etc.) are not explicitly articulated in the earlier work, at least not in comparable detail. Thus, while we can use the more famous *Phenomenology* stages as guides within our reading, we must avoid subsuming the new concepts under the earlier rubrics, and grasp the material aspect of Hegelian linguistics in its own right.

Secondly, we should recall that the *Philosophy of Mind* is the third and final volume of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia*, and that the volume that precedes it develops the context for the development of mental life out of organic nature. In fact, the earlier parts of the text repeat, in truncated form, the latter sections of the *Philosophy of Nature*.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Hegel's account of the material side of linguistics presupposes both organic nature and the development of sensible corporeality within it, and his accounts of them are occasionally called forth in the discussion of language. Moreover, the progress of mental development in the text contains not just large aspects of Hegel's theory of the dialectic of nature, but also the logical forms of thinking drawn from the *Science of Logic* and the first volume of

the *Encyclopaedia*, as well as the movements from sense-certainty through to self-consciousness, and moral and political life from the earlier *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Thus, the *Philosophy of Mind* is, in a way, a compact presentation of Hegel's entire system, but a presentation that nonetheless presupposes arguments from other texts for its own development.

In other words, while the material content of language is our starting point, within Hegel's thought it arises at a fairly advanced stage of subjective development, and, consequently, has as its presupposition the previous progression through a myriad of non-linguistic stages. Accordingly, language cannot be 'put in somewhere as an appendix' to the study of mind, but rather must be displayed in its 'necessity and connection to the systematic activity of intelligence' (W 10, §458, Anm.). A complete exegesis of Hegel's philosophy of language – as would a truly complete exegesis of any major aspect of Hegel's philosophy – would thus require a complete exegesis of Hegel's entire system.<sup>3</sup> Such a task, however, is clearly impossible here. Our focus is the systematic place of the acquisition of language. This place, according to Hegel, lies at the transition between imagination and memory, at the border between representation and thinking. Accordingly, we shall begin our analysis of language with the immediate context out of which the linguistic capacity arises, or with representation. However, in deference to the preceding caveat, we will detail – however imperfectly – the immediately preceding contextual setting for representational consciousness.

### From Intuition to Representation

Pre-representative consciousness, claims Hegel, intuits (*anschauen*) an objective world (W 10, §446). That is to say, immediately prior to the stage of representation, we find consciousness immersed in an experience of things in the world that appear to it to be objective. The objective side of intuition, here, consists of a found, seemingly ready-made content which determines the content of experience, while the subjective side is the internal, subjective form that receives the content of that world. For intuitive consciousness, the internal form of subjective intuition and the world that is intuited through it appear as a unity within which the content of our minds is objectively determined by the outside world.

This 'I/world unity, however, is no less a distinction. We only experience external content in so far as we have determined that content through our subjective form. While the particularity of each content determines the 'I' to have the experience that it does (e.g., if there were no desk



within my field of intuition, I could not attend to one as present), we can attend to whichever object we please (e.g., I may attend merely to the legs of the desk, its shiny surface, my reflection within its shiny surface, etc.), and nothing within that intuited content can alter our form of attentive intuition (i.e., it is the same 'I' that attends to objects through its form of intuition, no matter which object is currently attended). It is the formal 'I', then, rather than the external world that is the necessary condition for the possibility of determinate experience.

Thus, for Hegel, intuitive consciousness presupposes a universal form of experience as its necessary ground, that is it presupposes that the 'I' that makes its determinate, objective experience possible is universal to human experience. Explicitly positing this presupposition, however, brings the intuitive unity of the 'I' and its world into reflected difference. This difference reveals that the 'I' is the necessary and unchanging condition for any and all experiences, relegating the content of experience to the realm of mere contingency. What is objective and universal in experience is, in fact, the formal 'I' itself, not any particular content. Thus, the intuitive subject presupposes that its internal form of intuition is objective, grounding the necessity and universality of any particular experience. In terms of the *Phenomenology* we can say that this stage is analogous to the moment of 'Stoicism' wherein consciousness realizes that its seemingly immediate relation to the world presupposes a distinction between the experienced world and the 'I' that experiences it that frees it from genuinely external determination (*W3*, pp. 155–59/*PS*, §197–201). We should also note that Hegel again, as in his account of grammar, demonstrates that the immediacy of experiential content actually presupposes the reflective opposition of universal form and particular content; an opposition that, for Hegel, frees the universality of form from determination by the contingency of content.

Thus, beginning with the immediate unity of (external) content and (internal) form, Hegel demonstrates not only the reflective difference between form and content upon which intuition rests, but the tension between the universal attending power of the universal 'I' and the contingent determinations of the attended content that is intuited. If the necessary and universal side of experience in fact lies within the subject, then it would appear that the external 'finding of the content [is] no longer necessary' (*W10*, §450) for objective experience. Objective content is not really given to us from the outside, for without the attentive activity of mind there would be no determinate experiences at all. Because our experiences are determined by, rather than determining of, the subjective form of experience, it appears that objects are actively 'created'

by that form, and thus that the 'I' is the real origin of experience. The 'I', in its active attention, negatively determines the content that fills, and as such is the necessary and universal ground of, objective experience. The necessity of this form is that which grants objectivity and universality to the externally given content. The *Phenomenology* analogue, here, would be 'scepticism', within which consciousness realizes that its experience is essentially its negative activity upon the world (W 3, pp. 159–63/PS, §202–206).

Thus, intuitive mind comes to hold that the objective ground of its experience lies not in the objects it experiences, but in its own universal 'I'. Within immediate intuition, however, each experienced object appears to be externally determining, rather than freely chosen. As such, our intuitive world contradicts the actual nature of experience. Thus, merely intuitive experience becomes untenable for consciousness, which, in recognizing its universal 'I' as the free and universal ground of all determinate experience, now finds mere intuition to be self-contradictory. In order to explicitly posit this fact, experience must reflect the determination by the 'I' of its content.

In order to posit the real ground of experience, then, mind must somehow make its experienced content reflect its determination by its intentional form. According to Hegel, mind can only explicitly posit its own implicit activity by transforming its apparently 'external' content into subjectively determined 'internal' content. Hegel calls this process of transforming experience 'interiorization' or 'recollection' (*Erinnerung*) and the interiorized, formal versions of objects, he calls 'images' (*Bilder*) (W 10, §452). These concepts, however, are by no means straightforward or uncontroversial, and find no precise analogues in the *Phenomenology*. Thus, we must proceed with caution in explicating 'recollective' consciousness.

### Recollection (*Erinnerung*)

*Erinnerung* names the manner in which the 'I' 'posits [or places: *setzt*] the content of [sensation] in its interiority' (W 10, §452). In short, the seemingly external content of intuition must now be explicitly posited as existing in and through mind's own form. Of course, one cannot simply declare that external objects result from internal determinations, for example, just mind's own projections. Even if we could temporarily convince ourselves that was the case, the felt immediacy of intuitive experience would soon enough take over, re-instantiating

the contradiction. In other words, positing the nature of experience is not simply a matter of changing our own personal picture of our experience. The objects of experience, as external, never reflect the actual manner of their determination. Thus, the content of our experience will have to be somehow granted the essential characteristics of our subjective form. How, then, can the contingently determined objects of experience become universal forms of intuition?

Hegel's description of this transformation does little to make it easily understandable to a reader. In brief sketch, an intuited object must be 'liberated [*befreit*] from its original immediacy' in intuition (W 10, §452). This liberation from immediacy transforms the intuited content into a formal abstraction from immediate experience, which Hegel calls an 'image' or 'picture' (*Bild*) of the content. It is these internal images that grant the universality of form to the content of experience. On the surface, then, Hegel's account seems similar to Locke's theory of the origin of signs.<sup>5</sup> However, the flaws in asserting the existence of a subjective, formal 'image' abstracted from empirical content – in the form of a 'little mental picture' or abstract representation – are well known from Berkeley's devastating critique.<sup>6</sup> Hegel cannot plausibly think to succeed where Locke has failed, and thus if his account is to be successful, he cannot be read as positing an identical theory of images. Thus, let us take a closer look at Hegel's conception of 'liberating abstraction' by returning, for a moment, to re-examine intuitive attention, focusing this time on the content.

While intuition presupposes the determination of objects by the attending 'I', the determination of content no less presupposes an intuitive field to which the 'I' can attend. The intuition of objects presupposes a found continuity from which mind determines objects by actively attending to particular aspects of the field. Thus, rather than viewing, for example, my office as an undifferentiated field, I attend to the computer, desk, lamp, etc., or the office itself as an office, rather than a mere field of affect. Determining objects in this way is – there is no better word for it – an *abstraction* of them out of intuitive continuity. The 'abstraction from immediacy', then, begins as the attentive determination of intended objects within an intuitive field. This is a subjective act as it produces a determination within the field that is not present prior to attention. Thus, all objects of experience are present to mind whenever and wherever we attend to them, and not otherwise, that is, they exist for us in a spatial and temporal determination posited by the experiencing subject.

Grasping this abstractive process, however, deprives objects of 'the complete determination that [they appeared to have in immediate]



intuition' (W 10, §452). What is lost is not so much the clarity and vivacity of the intuited impression (as, for example, in Hume's theory of abstraction), but the immediate, found time and place that we (thought we) had in mere intuition. Thus, these objects are now recognized as having no objective relations with each other outside of mind's intending them. This is, of course, not to say that I can, for example, wish unicorns into my office to dance on that desk, but attention does posit the fact that we can only experience objects if we attentively abstract them out of the continuous field. Grasping this aspect of attention demonstrates that the spatio-temporal relations of the objects that I experience are not immediate, natural or necessary; to the contrary, the attended object now seems 'arbitrary or contingent, isolated, as it were, from the external place, time and immediate context in which it stood' (W 10, §452). Cut out from its continuity in the whole, an object has only our 'attention as its time as well as its place; its when and its where' (W 10, §453).

Grasping the process of abstraction simply reinforces the claim that the formal 'I' is 'the in-itself of its own [experiential] determinations' (W 10, §453), or the determining ground of experiential content. This determining abstraction takes place on the side of the subject, which we know to be formal. The process of abstraction, then, can be defined as the subjective act of determining objects out of the continuous intuitive field in accordance with subjective forms of attention. It is this abstraction that produces images.

Thus, an image is not a little mental picture, or general idea, of external objects. Images do not *replicate* external objects; they *produce* the determinate experience of them. An image, then, is a formal, intentional schema for abstracting objects out of the continuity of intuition into attention. Having attended to an object according to a schema of subjective intention, I 'interiorize' its 'image' by retaining the intentional form of abstraction through which I experienced it. By recalling the intentional form through which that object may be intended/attended to, I can use that image in the future for recognizing or re-intending similar or identical objects out of an appropriately constituted intuitive continuity. For example, my image of a desk is an intentional form for isolating one such object (when I come across appropriate intuitive fields) as being a desk, or my image of my computer allows me to attend to it and it alone in my messy office, or pick it out of a line-up of tables and chairs, or other computers as specifically mine, etc. Of course, any aspect of objective experience that can be attended to in space and time (sounds, colours, shapes, individuals, etc.) can be retained as an image for intending further experiences.

Experience, however, results from the *attentive* isolation of objects and we can only attend to a limited number of objects and/or aspects at one time. Therefore, we cannot and do not utilize all of our forms of recognition constantly or simultaneously, and the forms determinately exist for us only in so far as they are utilized to determine objects. This does not, however, imply that the forms simply disappear. Proof enough comes from the fact that we can and do recognize objects when we intend appropriate fields again. Such recognition presupposes that the abstracted images that make objective attention possible remain within consciousness as intentional possibilities for attention. Conversely, however, we could not experience new objects if these images were not 'stored away' when not in use, as they would impede our ability to abstract new images. Our experience of objects, then, is predicated both on our retention of images (as evinced by recognition), as well as the absence of images from consciousness when not in use (as evinced by novelty). It is for this reason that Hegel describes recollection as presupposing a 'night-like pit in which a world of infinitely many images is kept ... yet without being in consciousness' (W 10, §453) whose images are called forth in response to intuited content.

We can now fully explicate the process of recollection. Images are formal, intentional schemas for determining objects within intuitive fields through abstracting attention. These images lack both determinate 'objective' existence (as they are not immediately intuited externalities) and determinate 'subjective' existence (as they are mostly out of our consciousness in the pit). On the internal side of recollection, images are empty (and therefore in the pit) without intuitions; on the external side, however, an intuitive field without abstraction is blind continuity (i.e. not determinate experience). Thus, these 'abstract, stored images require a determinately existing intuition [*daseienden Anschauung*] for their determinate being [*Dasein*]' (W 10, §454). The determination and recognition of objects each require the production and calling forth of abstract images, which in turn require intuitive fields for their determination.

Thus, the existence of images within consciousness produces unconscious expectations for intentional intuition, which are then called forth from the pit when these expectations are met within appropriately constituted intuitive fields. Thus, Hegel's images are quite distant from Locke's 'general ideas', and are much closer to Husserl's meaning intentions, that is, intentional schemas that both produce expectations for fulfilment within intuition, and provide the determinate formal grounds for subjective recognition of that fulfilment.<sup>7</sup> However, while these images

produce intentional expectations, they are still only determinate when contingently met by intuition and, thus, they are essentially recognitive.

Recollection, then, can be strictly defined as the 'reference of [an] image to an intuition' (W 10, §454), or the determination of an intuitive field as presenting as an (either novel or familiar) instantiation of a formal scheme of intention. As such, the recollective reference is 'a subsumption of the individual [external] intuition under the form in accordance with the universal' image (W 10, §454). Recognized intuitions are posited as already belonging to me: that is, they are examples of the intuitions intended by my abstract formal images. No less, however, do these images receive concrete determination as mine through the recognition of objects. Images are both within our unconscious (as we know from the determinate recognition of objects), and only determinate for us outside of the pit in which they are submerged (as we know from their recollection by specific intuitions).

This, then, is what must have always already been taking place for us to experience determinate objects at all. The experience of determinate objects presupposes the production and retention of universal images, just as the production and retention of images presupposes the determination of objects. Knowing that recognition involves intentional expectations for experience, and that the intuitions that are recognized are expected by them, Hegel claims that we can grasp the determinate existence of the formal images produced by the internal 'I', or the internalized versions of external content. However, in order to fully grasp these images as the ground of experience (i.e. in order to posit the determination of the 'I' as the ground of experience), our images would have to be 'posited simultaneously [as] distinguishable from the [matching] intuition and [as] separable from the simple night in which [they were] at first sunk' (W 10, §454).

This is because truly grasping intentional images as the objective ground of experience is impossible so long as they remain bare forms of recognition. Images are empty without content, and grasping them through intuited content, not only does not posit the image itself, but returns us to apparent determination of experience through external content. Rather, grasping the images themselves presupposes mind's 'power to express [*äußern*] its own property' (W 10, §454) to itself. In other words, if we are to grasp the images that ground experience without reference to external intuition, we must be able to present examples of images to ourselves. This presentation of imaged content to ourselves is what Hegel calls 'representation proper, in which the inner, in itself, now has the determination of being able to be presented before [mind, and]



to have its determinate existence in it' (W 10, §454) without reference to external intuition. It is only through such a self-presentation that mind's form determines a content that reflects its nature. However, nothing we have encountered so far facilitates this kind of self-presentation of images. Thus, the self-presentation of images presupposes another, as yet implicit, power of mind, which Hegel calls the 'imagination'.

### Imagination (*Einbildungskraft*)

Imagination arises from Hegel's claim that the power to (re)cognize objects at all presupposes the power to represent such objects to oneself, without reference to intuition. However, Hegel cannot be claiming that the grasping of the process of recognition allows us to, as it were, see or feel images as universal forms, for we know that forms without content are empty. What he thinks we can do, however, is present to ourselves content like the content we intuit by meeting its intentional expectation in fantasy. In other words, Hegel is referring to our ability to internally imagine that we are experiencing intuitive content. While he gives us little in the way of argument for this power, focusing rather on providing an account of what the imagination *does*, we can roughly reconstruct a defence of its necessity from the preceding.

As we know from recognition, images that are not in use exist only as unconscious anticipations of possible future objects of experience. That is to say, the very act of recognition is determined by the 'non-presentness' of images. Thus, the grasping of the process of (re)cognition is the explicit awareness of images as they exist for us when appropriate content is not present, that is, as intentional forms that recollect past contents and anticipate future ones. Thus, recognition presupposes (1) that we have the capacity to bring forth experiential determinations that are not present in external intuition (i.e. images that recollect and anticipate content) and (2) that the determinate existence of these images can be grasped independently of intuition (i.e. we can grasp the existence of an image from its use in examples of recollection). However, (3) images cannot be determinately grasped without some manner of content (without which, they remain in the unconscious pit).

Given these facts, it follows that we must have the further power to present content to ourselves internally, rather than simply externally. Without this capability (1) images could not be grasped independently, as they would either be submerged in the pit and therefore unconscious or synthesized with intuitions and therefore appear as externally deter-

mined and (2) cognition would be limited strictly to externally presented content, which contradicts the very nature of experience. Thus, what Hegel calls the imagination arises because it is in the nature of the 'I' to explicitly posit its own activity, and images can only be grasped independently if we can present appropriate content to ourselves.

Hegel's central defence of the imagination relies simply on an appeal to our everyday experiences of it. In the *Philosophical Prolegomena* (W 4, pp. 46–50),<sup>8</sup> for example, Hegel explains the functioning of the imagination by detailing the increasingly fantastic productions of dreaming (one could also include day-dreams or fantasies), sleep-walking and delirium. In short, if there are such things as dreams, hallucinations and fantasies (and, as we all know from experience, there are), then we have the ability to call forth images from our unconscious pits, without the need for external intuitions. Moreover, the fact that we *need* to dream and fantasize (i.e. that even in sleep or hazes we give ourselves intentional content) points to the fact that images continually anticipate intuited content in which they are met. The forms of intuition cannot abide a lack of content, and we will present it to ourselves if need be, and by extension are able to do so by choice.

So, even though we rarely acknowledge them as such, dreams and fantasy are examples of mind's grasping of its images independently of external intuition. Here, images are linked with *subjectively presented* content (some imagined internal 'intuition' or 'picture'), thus demonstrating that mind is now in *possession* of its property, that is that it can wield its images through content that is self-produced. The kinds of apples I imagine as examples of my apple-image are of my own design, and thus need not be (although, of course, they can be) full of worms or puny or wrinkly, as I so often find them within intuitive fields. Moreover, they need not be (but can be) associated with hunger or envy, or with markets or paintings as I so often associate them in intuition. In imagination, my images can be associated with whatever other images I want, in any order or fashion that I want (e.g. they can be on distant planets, next to bloody heads or held by white-robed figures).

However, the game is not totally open. The imagined content must genuinely fit the expectation of our image. Our images are formal structures of expectation, and these forms determine whether or not any given fantasy (just like any given intuition) successfully meets our expectation. Thus, the imagined content must sufficiently resemble the content determined 'outside' in intuition. A corollary of this is that any connections that I freely make between imagined contents 'can [only] occur in accordance with the various determinations which the representations

possess' (W 4, p. 47). In other words, it is the abstracted determinations of the content that lead me to associate images with some others. In the flow of imagination, we move from content to content in accordance with their determinations. Thus, my apple could be associated with Mars or a bloody head, because they are all red, or with other fruit according to genus, etc. Some associations are quite direct (e.g. the genus with the species), some more abstract (e.g. by colour, size), some quite abstract (e.g. books and apples as being able to be on tables or chairs, all objects associated as spatial or temporal, etc.). What is key, here, is that every new association that mind makes between images 'is thereby a subsumption of the particular under a universal which solidifies their connection' (W 10, §456); that is, there must be a connection between the determinations of the images in order for them to be related. The determinations according to which any two images can be brought into connection are still intentions, and are thus still tied to expectations for experiential content, but at a higher level of generality forged by a determination common to both. Thus, any two or more contents can be associated by imagination provided there is another universal image (e.g. fruit, red, colour) whose expectation they all meet. To distinguish them, Hegel calls the images employed as connections 'representations' or 'ideas' (*Vorstellungen*) (cf. W 10, §455). So, images are connected with each other in imagination through more general ideas under which both images can be subsumed. This creative act of connecting images according to ideas Hegel calls *Phantasie*.

Despite this (actually quite weak) limitation, there is no necessity to any subject's actual development of any connecting representation between two images. Because the intuitive field from which images are abstracted, the abstracted images themselves and the imagined versions of them are all contingent to an experiencing individual, the associations between images depend on the particular subject producing them. It is the 'peculiar content' (*eigentlichen Inhalt*) (W 10, §456) of the experiencing subject, then, that determines its ideas and, by extension, its intentional determination of its images.

In sum, with imagination, we are able to present to ourselves imagined content that meets our formal expectations for objects and gives determinate being to our images outside of intuition. Consequently, we are able to create general ideas that connect images according to further abstract forms. In imagination, mind explicitly posits its inter-connected abilities to isolate, recollect and anticipate objects through abstract images, grasp images on their own in imagination, and compare and connect images through general ideas in fantasy. As such, mind reveals



its ability to intentionally determine experiential content solely within its formal interiority. In other words, it has taken the content of its contingent external intuition and explicitly posited it as a unity with the universal and formal 'I'. It would appear, then, that we have arrived at the completed unity of our form and content produced out of the reflective dichotomy between thought and its object, as promised in the 1809 '*Rede*'.

What we have actually achieved, however, is a completely one-sided unity. Intuition was predicated upon an implicit dichotomy between an external, 'objective' content and the internal, universal form through which any and every experience was made possible. In attention and recollection, we saw that the formal 'I' was in fact determined as the objective ground of experience. This led to the positing of ideas and images as the formal schemes through which determinate experience is possible. In imagination, however, we confront the fact that these forms of experience and cognition (i.e. ideas and images) are themselves developed in accordance with the contingent experiences of particular subjects. The 'I' becomes thoroughly unified with its content, but that unity is peculiarly subjective. In short, the subjective formal 'I' cannot be the objective ground of experience, for its determinate forms of content determination are contingent to its own idiosyncratic development. Whatever experiences we have are not objective, but reflect only the ideas we happened to develop, and the images we happened to connect content through. As such, we have stumbled into subjective idealism.

In short, the very conditions for the possibility of determinate objective experience reveal that experience to be subjectively peculiar and contingent. What comes again to the fore in the split is mind's original demand that, in accordance with the originally revealed necessity and universality of its form, its content too be determined as objective. Mind presupposes the universality and necessity of its intentional determination of content, but the experiences, images and ideas it produces are not equal to its purported universality and objectivity. As such, mind cannot remain satisfied with its present state of knowledge, and must somehow determine the objectivity it presumes of its form.

However, images cannot simply be given up. As we have seen, without such images, experience is impossible. Even if we erased our habits and started afresh, every image falls prey to the same problem. As such, what we must determine is the objectivity of our ideas. Because ideas are subjective, and not objective, what we must demonstrate is the fact that the ideas and images through which we determine experiential content are shared by other experiencing subjects. In other words, we

must demonstrate that our abstract forms of intentional experience are common to all minds.

However, mere experience with other minds within intuition is not enough to demonstrate the universality of intentional ideas. While we presuppose the universality of our forms of experience, we have no immediate access to other minds and it is precisely the *internal* forms of experience that are open to question. Thus, a *medium* is required that allows the exchange of formal ideas between subjects. Minds must have a way of expressing their ideas to other intuiting subjects for the purpose of confirmation. In other words, intentional forms of subjective experience must be 'made to be, and to be a fact' (W 10, §457) that can be experienced – and hopefully confirmed – by others. We must somehow transform our ideas and images into the intuitive externalities in whose experience other subjects appear to share.

### From Representation to Signification

Thus far, we have seen that intuitive experience implicitly presupposes the ability to convey images and ideas to other subjects for the purpose of testing their universality. Our task now is to determine how we can externalize our 'property': that is, make it an intuition which can be worked up and (hopefully) confirmed by others. Obviously, we cannot externalize our property *as* our property, for images and ideas only exist internally, which is why their objectivity is in question. In order to test the universality of its content, mind must externalize its internal forms, but it can only do so within the 'filled space and time [*den erfüllten Raum und Zeit*]' of intuited objects (W 10, §458). We are constrained, then, to express internal ideas through some external intuition. Thus, one can only accomplish the demanded task of externalization by somehow synthesizing the 'externally' found (intuited objects) and the 'internally' forged (images and ideas) into a new entity. Hegel calls such expressive intuitions 'signs'.

However, we have seen that *merely* intuited objects always lead us to subjectively abstract the objects' found content into images or ideas, whose universality we are precisely trying to determine. Any *mere* intuition will simply be experienced in accordance with one's already forged subjective ideas, and thus will not be understood as expressing someone else's internal ideas. Intuitions, then, can only be expressive signs if 'the proper [i.e. intuited] content [*der eigene Inhalt*] of the intuition, and that [idea] whose sign the intuition is to be, never contaminate each other [*geht*

*einander nichts an]*' (W 10, §458, Anm.). The intuited, signifying aspect of a sign, then, must be *arbitrary*. Signifying mind must import a new content – a mental, forged content – into an arbitrary intuition in order to make its expressions understandable as expressions.

Thus, the 'essential determination' of the intuition made sign is 'to exist only as sublated' (W 10, §459). A sign is first something given in intuition (as Hegel says, 'e.g. the colour of the cockade, etc.' [W 10, §458]) that 'is deemed [by the signifying mind] in the identity [of the object and the image] not as positive or as itself, but as representing something else' (W 10, §458). Signs are intuitions that are posited as representing something other than their merely intuited content.

This 'other' content is the sign's '*meaning*' (*Bedeutung*) (W 10, §458). A sign *means* a subjective idea or image and an intuition becomes a sign when, in our intuiting of it, we recall/interiorize its meaning, rather than its intuited content, for example, when the colour of the cockade is no longer merely an intuition of mere colour, but recalls to us the totally distinct meaning of military rank. Of course, the colour is still intuited as a colour, but it only functions as a sign when its interiorization primarily recalls an unrelated idea as its determination.

How, then, are signs – and, more specifically, linguistic signs – actually created?

It is precisely regarding these points that Hegel's text provides both the least information and the most confusing and fragmentary account. At times he appears to rely on aspects of consciousness and signification deduced either previously in the *Encyclopaedia*, or elsewhere in his works. Moreover, his account sometimes works backward from everyday signification to its principles, rather than vice versa. In what follows, then, I will endeavour to develop an account of the linguistic sign consistent with the Hegelian principles of representation and signification detailed so far.

Hegel describes the sign as transforming an 'intuition at first immediately enduring as a given and *spatial thing* [*ein Gegebenes und Räumliches*]' to the 'truer form [*wahrhaftere Gestalt*] of intuition that a sign is – a *determinate being in time*' (W 10, §459). Without explicit defence, Hegel switches from an account of how externalities 'in [the] filled space *and* time' of intuition (W 10, §458, my emphasis) are transformed into signs, to claim that space *is sublated* by time through the negativity of intelligence. What could prompt this abrupt change?

We approach the answer when we recognize that Hegel's account begins with an attempt to explain the most commonly used signs, those of spoken language. Although Hegel's earliest example of a sign (the colour of the cockade) seems to privilege spatial/visible intuitions, such 'mute'



signs do not provide the 'universality test' for which signs are created." The subjective recognition of one spatial thing (e.g. smoke) as the sign of the existence of some other existent thing (e.g. fire) is simply a subjective representation, that is, a connecting idea between two objects recognized through formal images. If it functions as a sign, this is a matter of contingent habit or association. Further connections (e.g. smoke as the sign of the village priest who controls the fire) are just so many more abstract connecting ideas and associative senses which are, by definition, private, while signs must be public. In other words, such visual intuitions *may* function as signs, but they do not *necessarily* do so for all members of the community. For an intuition to be communally recognized as a sign, it must be intuited as an 'external, psychic determinacy, a posited being arising from intelligence' (W 10, §459). Signs must be intuitions that can be objectively recognized by all as expressing subjective ideas, and the intuitions that accomplish this most readily are those that actually arise directly from subjects.

Thus, it is not surprising that Hegel locates the primary sign-making medium as one arising out of our 'own anthropological naturalness' (W 10, §459), and specifically from our ability to produce an intuited, sounded tone (*Ton*) (W 10, §459). The reference to anthropology is meant to remind the reader of the natural expressions of interiority that Hegel details in that earlier section of the *Encyclopaedia* under the heading of immediate feeling. We must, then, take a brief excursion to this more primitive stage of consciousness, which, like the rest of the *Encyclopaedia* that precedes it, constitutes the presupposed background for signification.

Under the heading of immediate feeling, Hegel examines the pre-phenomenological experience of corporeal stimulation. Here, feeling denotes the basic bodily receptivity that makes possible our more determinate experience in intuition. Immediate feeling, no less than immediate intuition, is a unity of the internal and external spheres, but one which lacks the determinacy of the latter. The exterior sphere of feeling is solely populated by 'bodily affection[s]' that are transformed by the subject's activity into 'the being-for-itself of soul [*Fürsichsein der Seele*]' by being 'made interior' (W 10, §401). The contents of the inner sphere, on the other hand, 'belong to the soul and originate within it, [but] in order to exist as if merely found and felt, [they] become bodily' (W 10, §401). For our purposes, what is important to note is signification's essential presupposition of an embodied mind that can both receive sensible stimulation and express its reactions to sensation corporeally. Among the many facets of the body that can be invested with specific feelings (e.g.

the chest, in which rage and courage are felt; the head, where mental stresses are felt, etc.) we, prior to any explicit linguistic ability, encounter the 'voice in general' (W 10, §401, Anm.) as expressive of our interiority. More precisely, Hegel reminds us that, even prior to acquiring language and perhaps even prior to having determinate thoughts at all, we can and do (provided we have the requisite organs) express feelings through 'speech, laughter, sighs and other particularizations' (W 10, §401, Anm.) of voice. In other words, as evinced even by giggling babies, the power of the voice to corporeally express interior content is an essential aspect of our being.

It is important to note that the specificity of the voice is connected not to any logical principle, but to our organic body. We vocalize because we can, not because we must, and thus the fundamental prevalence of vocal language is (at least to our knowledge) somewhat contingent. While it is necessary that we be able to express interiority corporeally, we simply cannot give a reason why the products of 'the voice in general' are the 'most familiar [*bekanntesten*] connections that link' the mental and the physical (W 10, §401, Anm.). Speaking is just what those of us with the requisite physiognomy happen to do, and is thus a matter for study within some future science of 'psychical physiology' (W 10, §401, Anm.). Thus, it is no more necessary that we vocalize than it is that birds do so, but, being the kind of being that can vocalize, we naturally utilize it as an expression of inner content.<sup>10</sup>

What does vocal expression tell us about the sublation of intuition by time? Here, we must recall arguments presented elsewhere regarding the progressive *ideality* of the forms of intuition. Hegel defines ideality as 'the negation of the real [by the subject, in which] the real is saved, is virtually preserved [*virtualiter erhalten ist*], even if in that preservation it doesn't exist' (W 10, §403, Anm.). Ideality names our ability to rise above the intuited field by interiorizing it, while preserving the formal essence of intuition within as images and ideas. Ideality, then, is the general name for the abstracting activity of the formal, universal 'I'. It is in his *Lectures on Aesthetics* that we find Hegel's clearest account of the specific ideality of the different corporeal senses.<sup>11</sup>

In the *Aesthetics*, sight – the sense that apprehends spatial objects by means of light – is identified as the first ideal sense, and its objective medium (lighted space) is correlatively ideal. Seeing spatial intuitions through the medium of light, as opposed to immediately being affected by them physically in touch, both allows spatial objects to exist freely (unimpeded by such threats to the purity of their determination as being tampered with, or being ingested, by subjects), as well as freeing subjects

up to interiorize ideas of them as determinate objects (rather than undifferentiated sensations).

Although sight is an ideal sense in that it negates immediate continuity into preserved ideas, it is not fully ideal. While its content is negated in its immediacy, it is only negated in so far as it is abstracted and interiorized. While mind can then present this abstracted content to itself in fantasy, upon opening its eyes, as we have seen, it will again be confronted by intuition within which external objects will again appear to externally determine the subject. What sight 'views is not something posited as ideal in itself [*ist nicht das in sich selbst Ideelgesetzte*], but on the contrary something preserved in its sensible existence' (W 15, p. 134). Objects of sight, while certainly ideal, are not ideal enough to be a 'truly appropriate material' for expressing a 'subjective inwardness' characterized by ideality (W 15, p. 133). Mind is a negating activity, not a passive substance, yet the persistence of visual intuition fails to express this ideality. In order to fully express subjective ideality, we require a material which 'in its being-for-another is unstable [*haltlos*], and in its ... origin and determinate being itself already disappears again' (W 15, p. 133). In other words, to express ideality we need an equally ideal (i.e. negating, active) sense-material. This can only be achieved if space itself is sublated by a higher negation. The immobility of space must be negated in its very passivity and persistence.

Hegel argues that space is ideally negated when it moves or is moved, that is when physical objects (e.g., strings, wind blown through tunnels and, of course, vocal chords) vibrate producing the non-spatial form of sound. Sound is action, not passivity and, as such, genuinely corresponds – one might say resonates – with the ideal activity that is determining mind. Sound is immediately recognizable as the product of activity and, when emanating from a subject (in music and, especially, vocal song and speech) is even more easily recognized as such. Thus, we can see how the two aspects of speech come together to express ideality: as sound it is recognized as being the result of activity, and as emanating from a subject it is moreover instantly recognized as arising from the active ideality of formal mind. Other kinds of moving space (writing on sand on a tidal beach, writing on an etch-a-sketch, etc.) lack the subjective and ideal elements needed for the proper pairing of both ideality and its recognition.<sup>12</sup>

As moving negation, of course, sound does not persist after its creation. A painting or cockade persists in space after it is produced. A speech or song, to the contrary, lasts only as long as the subjective activity of its production is undertaken. Thus, sound is temporal (as opposed to



spatial) in that all tones actively negate themselves in their very utterance. Each temporal tone is 'a disappearance of the determinate being in which it exists [*ein Verschwinden des Daseins, indem es ist*]' (W 10, §459).

The sense that receives sound is of course hearing, but the act of hearing goes beyond mere receptivity. In order to perceive vibration, the ear itself must be active, moving and trembling in its own corporeality (its drum). In the act of hearing, a subject 'hears the results of the inner vibration of the body' (W 15, p. 134) that actively respond to the outer vibrations of the tone-producing object. Hearing, in other words, hears its own inner vibration. The eardrum is surely caused to vibrate by the external sound, but nonetheless negates that vibration in hearing it through its own movement. Sounds are heard through the hearer's own activity and cease to exist when that activity stops (e.g., if one stops up one's ears). The ideality of hearing, like that of sight, allows the hearer to abstract from sensory data, but it abstracts without a potentially determining external remainder. Thus, the vocal tones with which we are concerned are both produced and heard by subjective activity.

Thus, vocal sounds as signs negate/sublate space twice. First, sound negates space by transferring the abstracted mental images or ideas of external objects into sound, and again by erasing itself as negation/sublation of space in that very negation/sublation. Expressive sound 'takes the subjective as such as both its form and its content, in that ... it truly brings the interior into [external] communication, yet in its objectivity itself remains subjective' (W 15, p. 133). Thus, signifying 'intelligence is this, its negativity' which, by producing expressive sounds, produces the 'truer form of intuition' as 'a determinate being in time' (W 10, §459). Vocalizations, then, are both the natural (cf. *Anthropology*) and the ideal (cf. *Aesthetics*) expressions through which the inner states are intuited externally.

What require expression in sign-making, however, are not merely indeterminate felt states, but images and ideas, which are determinate forms of intention. To match this determinacy, the vocalizations must be as discrete and determinate as the ideas they are intended to express. Of course, these vocalizations are not determinate in the sense of being necessarily connected to the idea, as they must be arbitrary in order to signify imported meaning. Rather, what is required of the vocal tone first used in vaguely expressive sighs and cries is that it *become refined* so as to be determinate in itself, that is, a 'further articulated tone' (W 10, §459), in order to express intentional ideas. This articulation, unlike the 'raw' expressions of laughter and cries, gives the tone a determinacy all its own, distinguishing it from others. Articulation creates a range of

determinate tones that are distinct from each other, allowing them to be joined to equally determinate images and ideas. Thus, language consists of subjective ideas that are psychologically linked to articulated sounds, in which the latter call the former to mind.<sup>13</sup>

The movement towards articulated tones adequate to express determinate ideas is the beginning of the construction of 'the lexical element' of language, or what Hegel calls 'words' (W 10, §459, Anm.). It would be too narrow, however, to take Hegel's 'Wort' literally. Because words are simply defined as articulated tones synthesized with a meaning, the range of 'words' within the lexicon would include not just nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs but multi-word expressions with one idea content, prefixes and suffixes that signify new meanings for the words to which they attached, etc. Hegel's famous analyses of the meaningful units that construct 'words' (e.g. *Ur-teil*, *Da-sein*), moreover, seem to indicate that we are meant to read the broader concept 'lexeme' in the place of 'Wort', a technical concept within contemporary linguistics, but one which is anticipated here by Hegel, as it was in many other linguistic accounts prior to the contemporary definition.<sup>14</sup> Thus, 'words' convey any determinate meaning, and thus encompass a much broader range than Hegel's offhand example of 'lion' suggests.<sup>15</sup> It is this broader range of words that individuals acquire and utilize to express their ideas to others.

### The Acquisition of Linguistic Content

Drawing upon all that we have said so far, we can now roughly reconstruct the process of individual lexical acquisition. Intuiting minds seek to demonstrate the objectivity of their ideas by communicating them to others. This communication can only take place through intuitions in principle perceivable by all; however, intuitions can only express ideas if they are intuited as referring to a subjective, ideal meaning, rather than their own content. This is best accomplished by arbitrary signs that emanate from an active, ideal subject. This expression, then, is not primarily accomplished by acts that result in spatial objects (colouring cockades, drawing, etc.); both because they remain inert, and thus lose whatever subjective origin they may have had, and because their subjective origin is not immediately recognizable. The material best suited to an expressive lexicon is that which is produced through movement, primarily the vocal tone. Thus, when articulated vocal signs are available they form the primary content of language, and (by a subjective act of association)

are associated with subjective meanings. These material signs are called words (roughly, lexemes).

However, clearly not all attempts at sign-making have a recognized meaning in one's community; such pre-linguistic attempts fail to communicate ideas to others. This is why Hegel specifies that language acquisition is not *simply* the synthesis of a subjective internality to a sound. Rather, real language is acquired as we progress from mere vocal expression to articulated tones. In other words, Hegel's account of the progress from indeterminate expression to articulated sign explicates (albeit too briefly) the manner in which we progress from mere babbling to uttering articulate words.

We articulate our tones precisely so that they are recognizable by others as both distinct from each other, and as conveying specific intentional ideas. Thus in order for our meanings to be understood we must synthesize them with articulated tones that will be recognized by others as being the tones that indicate the specific meanings we seek to express. Thus, articulation is undertaken so that we express the sounds that communally express specific meanings. Of course, these words will only be so recognized if others also use them in the same way (e.g. no matter how articulate my pronunciation of 'fish' is, if I am using it to express my idea of a tricycle, it will fail to communicate my ideas to others). Thus, articulation is not just a matter of clarifying our speech-sounds, but of learning to sound the specific words that others use to communicate particular ideas. This process is not explicitly detailed by Hegel, but the general logic of expression and articulation makes clear the trajectory of this development. We refine the articulation of our expressions in order to make our words genuinely expressive to others. Thus, recognition by others of our expressions leads us to master those articulate tones, which in turn leads to further recognition and more acquisition, etc. The words we acquire, then, are subjective arbitrary syntheses of a sound and an idea, but our freedom to create such signs is limited by our need to communicate ideas to others in a shared language.

Thus, while language arises out of our ideal freedom, the demands of communication give the process determinate structure and limits. The freedom to create associations, then, explains how and why words can be introduced into language, second-language learning is possible, dialects and individuals differ in pronunciation and vocabulary, etc; while the ability to abstract from intuition, for its part, explains how we can grasp the lexemes of others as determinate, how we can and why we do imitate them, etc.



In sum, then: language acquisition is the process whereby we progressively refine our subjective ability to create signs until we are able to express linguistic signs that have (in Saussurean terms) 'value' for the community. Thus, the 'lexical' side of Hegel's linguistics holds that language is composed of words that are both created by and shared between subjects, whose use is necessitated by the drive to determine the universality of one's thoughts within a linguistic community, and whose selection as (for those who can make them) vocal signs is governed by the relative ideality of the material and the 'naturalness' of their expression.

### The Problem with Sound

The double sublation that makes speech possible, however, appears to invest time and sound with a special 'subjective' significance at odds with the objective demands of language. Signification, let us recall, is only possible because the objects that become signs already exist in the intuited realm. Signs are intuitions wrested from their natural 'foundness' and invested with subjective meanings. If the articulated sounds were not developed from the external, they could not be intuitions, and therefore could not convey meanings objectively between subjects.

Thus, the key to Hegel's whole account of signs is that *their signifiers are developed found exteriorities*.<sup>16</sup> It is only from 'originally sensuous intuitions' (W 10, §459, Anm.) that linguistic signs can be produced, implying that genuine communication requires us to adopt public lexicons as our own. The valued, lexical content of language, even if spoken, is – *qua* language – exterior to the subjective interiority of ideas. In other words, language can only be objectively expressive of subjective ideas if language signs *are never merely subjective*.

However, it is precisely this externality and objectivity that is lacking in Hegel's account of *spoken* words. Recall that hearing consists solely in the internal, ideal and subjective action (i.e. inner vibration) of the listener. Others may use speech to communicate to us, but the reception of that communication exists solely in and through our subjective, internal action. Thus, there is no guarantee that our actions will not or do not distort the message when it is 'received' in a manner that deprives the sign of its actual intuited content. In everyday experience we often block words out from our hearing, or impart undue emphasis or emotional import to their meaning, etc. Beyond mere intonation or colour, the affective qualities of loud/soft, accent/intensity, etc. can alter the actual sign being uttered, calling up different ideas in the listener's

mind. Because speech depends for its hearing on the inner activity of a hearer, there is no guarantee that a spoken message will convey the idea it was intended to express to others. Speech remains essentially open to subjective caprice. In short, language as speech is not objective to all and therefore tests and proves nothing. Thus, while it is true that speech constitutes the primary form of expression, spoken language can only truly be linguistic, representative and expressive if its signs can be determined as more universally objective. In short, as the medium for expressing subjective ideas within a community, speech presupposes the existence of a more universal version of itself.

It is this necessary objectification that leads Hegel from spoken words to an account of their written form. While Hegel claims to 'mention [language as writing] only in passing' (W10, §459, Anm.), he nonetheless devotes more than twice the amount of space to writing as he does to speech, using it to introduce new problems such as linguistic diversity, linguistic standardization, changes within a lexicon and, most importantly, the transition to memory and pure thinking.<sup>17</sup> As such, it may be that the key to understanding Hegel's theory of signs lies in their 'written' form. However, this lengthy passage does read like something of an afterthought, as it lacks the argumentative rigour of the previous sections. Moreover, Hegel's discourse is punctuated by the kind of Eurocentrism indicative of his era. As a result, demonstrating the conceptual basis for writing as 'a further progression [*Fortbildung*] in the particular field of language' (W 10, §459, Anm.), rather than a debased afterthought or suppressed other to speech, will require some careful reconstruction. Thus it is best to begin by examining how Hegel himself comes to realize the subjective caprice that haunts speech. This arises in Hegel's discussion of the Chinese language, the primary target of both his contemplation and criticism in the passage on writing (W 10, §459, Anm.). I do not seek, here, to defend, or even really to entertain Hegel's prejudicial misunderstandings of the Chinese language. I do, however, want to use the account of Chinese to demonstrate both Hegel's insight into the problem with sound, as well as his solution to it.

This problem, recall, arises from speech's inability to provide the determinately objective signs for inter-subjective communication that are both the presupposition, and desired end, of language. The inter-subjective set of others with whom we seek to communicate constitutes (by virtue of sharing language signs) a linguistic community whose expressive materials *should* be the same, that is, one that shares a common articulated lexicon. Expressive signs are created within communities with particular expressive materials, housed in different sounds that,

because they belong to that particular community, are recognized by its members as being expressive of some idea. The various lexemes are generally discernable (although not determinately objective) within one's own given community as meaningful units, rather than simply strings of noises without break, and the intonations and accents are recognized as constituting, in part, each meaningful unit. The communal particularity of these lexicons, however, becomes obvious to us when we have any experience with a member of a linguistic community whose lexemes and especially phonetics departs radically from our own. Such an experience, Hegel claims, occurs for the 'European, beginning to speak Chinese' (W 10, §459, Anm.).

The phonetic system of Chinese is tonal: that is, it expresses determinate lexical content through features such as pitch and inflection. In other words, the Chinese vocal language uses as articulated tones expressions that the European associates with subjective affections. Given Chinese words, then, Hegel habitually hears 'screams' (of pain, desperation, etc.) or 'soft whispers' (of fear, shyness, etc.) (W 10, §459, Anm.). In other words, for ears unused to the subtleties of tonal phonetics, what are meant to be objective expressions of determinate meanings are actually received (through the peculiarity of the ear's inner vibrations) as immediate expressions of mere states of bodily affection. The very nature of spoken language almost compels us to impose subjective interpretations onto vocal expressions. Experiencing the languages of other cultures makes this fact vivid and concrete for us, as therein we are apt to 'fall into the most ridiculous misunderstandings' (W 10, §459, Anm.).

Thus, the meeting between radically different linguistic communities occasions misunderstandings and confusions precisely because of the subjective reception of spoken language. It is important to emphasize this: confronting another linguistic community reveals to us that spoken discourse is *always haunted by its contingently subjective production and reception*. This fact could equally well arise in hearing a familiar word pronounced differently in regional dialects or even just everyday conversation. All speech, as subjective in production and reception, is prey to individual contingency, and thus is not intuited universally by all; cross-cultural contact simply is the most vivid demonstration of this contingency. It is precisely this misunderstanding that leads Hegel, for example, to prejudicially chastise the 'imperfection of the Chinese language', believing that 'a number of its words' have upwards of 'ten or even twenty different meanings' (W 10, §459, Anm.). Applying his community's standard of 'word' to that of another leads Hegel to imagine that ten *different* words are in fact *identical*, albeit affectively coloured. Hegel's analysis of



Chinese, then, either expressly recognizes or unconsciously demonstrates merely subjective speech to be an incomplete and unsatisfactory mode of expression. In short, we still require a medium that can be intuited by others in their subjective reception as that which is intuited by us in ours. In other words, speech presupposes a version of itself that is not open to subjective caprice.

In sum, then: a universal medium for communication is both lacking within and presupposed by spoken discourse. This universal medium, moreover, must determine the objectivity of the already formed sign system that is speech, which is the 'original language' (*ursprünglichen Sprache*) with which ideas are already unified. The original language of speech must be grasped as determinately universal, and, since subjective ideality has proved insufficient for the purpose, subjects seeking further universalization of already existing signs must 'take the help of an externally [*äußerlich*] practical activity' to achieve a 'further progression' in expression (W 10, §459, Anm., my emphasis). Spoken language becomes more universal in being explicitly posited as an externality in principle shared by all. In short, speech presupposes writing.

Hegel's dense commentary on the construction of written script would require lengthy commentary were it not for the fact that its structure (albeit at a further progression) is identical to that of vocal signs. Signs are intuited externalities forged with subjective internalities. Speech has revealed itself to be overly prone to subjective affection and interpretation, and thus demands a synthesis of its own subjective material with some more universally perceivable (i.e. more external) intuition. A subjective internality (speech) is wedded with a more stable externality (writing) to form a more universal expression of inner content. Thus, writing is not an addendum to speech, nor does it simply supplement speech as an aid to the greater perfection of the spoken word. Written script arises precisely because merely subjective speech is not adequate for the task of language. In short, speech, as the medium of objective communication, implicitly presupposes writing.

Thus, the development of writing out of the contingency of speech makes the subjective creation of the sign – for the first time – a sign universally shared by all. In written form, 'the word, intelligence's peculiar and most worthy manner of the expression of its representations, is brought to consciousness and made an object [*Gegenstande*] of reflection' (W 10, §459, Anm.). Writing is required to complete the process of universalizing subjective ideas begun by spoken words, by making signs into something public, communal and objective.

Of course, writing must demonstrate its subjective influence, lest it remain unrecognized as sign. It is for this reason (regardless of the historical accuracy of the claim) that Hegel argues that 'the first communication [*Verkehr*] of peoples ... brought about the need for, and genesis of, alphabetic writing [*Buchstabenschrift*]' (W 10, §459, Anm.). Hegel is quick to specify a kind of writing and we must therefore articulate his (admittedly flawed) reasons for admiring the phonetic over the hieroglyphic. Writing, for Hegel, brings 'the sensible aspects of speech into the form of universality' (W 10, §459, Anm.) as spatial objectivities, externalizing them from their merely subjective corporeality. *Phonetic* writing makes the already forged signs into representative universalities by spatializing their temporal, ideal sounds. The composite elements that make spoken words temporal (their sounded tones) are transformed into new spatial forms that represent these temporal subjectivities in spatial intuition. Phonetic writing consists, then, of 'signs of signs' in which 'the concrete signs of spoken language – words – are broken down into their simple elements, which are then signified' (W 10, §459, Anm.).

In hieroglyphic writing, to the contrary, Hegel claims that written signs never reach the proper level of arbitrariness. Hieroglyphics represent ideas of images through similar images, related symbolically. Because we can only speak in tones, not images, such languages have no firm relation to speech, and therefore cannot give universality to already forged signs. It can, he admits (W 10, §459, Anm.), give some stability to our ideas of sensuous objects (symbolic relations calling forth similar ideas in our minds, as the pictogram of a woman<sup>18</sup> calls forth the idea of women or the female gender in our minds), but they cannot adequately represent our panorama of determinate meanings. Written language needs to reflect the kind of subjective ideas that are first immediately voiced in speech, and thus have the kind of flexibility that (as we know from speech) is best achievable through completely arbitrary signifiers.

Others have already adequately refuted this inaccurate view of hieroglyphics and their content, and these arguments neither need, nor shall receive, reiteration here.<sup>19</sup> Hegel clearly ignores the difficulty in rigidly separating alphabetical and hieroglyphic scripts,<sup>20</sup> seems unwilling to believe that the different writing systems could serve their communities equally well, and appears to draw his conclusions solely from his own frustrations. However, the logic of Hegel's arguments concerning the presuppositions of speech do not, in fact, require us to demonstrate the relative superiority of one sign system over another, or even, I contend, the existence of actual systems of written script. To understand why, we must clarify the nature of his fundamental claim that writing arises to

correct the subjective and community-based contingencies present in spoken discourse.

Writing is apparently introduced to make spoken signs less open to the caprice of subjects and communities. Now, actual examples of writing are often difficult to decipher, sloppily formed, difficult to decode when their 'code' is lost, or otherwise open to the subjective particularity of individual writers and readers. Moreover, the scripts of others are often as foreign to us as their accents (e.g., as hieroglyphic systems are to Hegel), and so it is simply not plausible to think that just writing things down makes them less subjectively or culturally particular. Thus, if we are to make a plausible account of Hegel's text, we cannot limit his concept of writing simply to examples of script on paper and stone. So, let us take a closer look at writing to see what general tasks Hegel invokes it to perform.

Writing explicitly posits a communal standard of signs shared with others that is not the subjective signs that individuals contingently express to and receive from each other. While the origins of writing are somewhat hidden in history, the examples of early script we possess are for the most part commercial documents that rely upon, despite the different scripts in use in trading cultures, a common set of numbers (thus allowing a universal avenue for checking the quantities in inventories).<sup>21</sup> One present-day example of such a common sign-set is that of Chinese logograms. Hegel had one thing right; these logograms are themselves lexemes, rather than representing the phonetic parts of speech. However, the writing system provides a standard of expression such that speakers of 'mutually unintelligible dialects can share texts ... and many documents that are thousands of years old are readable by modern speakers'.<sup>22</sup> The hallmark of writing, then, is the explicit positing of the presupposed *standardization of signs* within a community, or between communities. Writing is introduced to posit a set of signs between subjects that is nonetheless outside of all subjective peculiarity. In other words, written signs are presumed to be particular to none, and always *of the other*. Given the task it is introduced to perform, the essence of writing lies not in the marks left by carving or ink. 'Writing', rather, essentially posits *the generally articulated signs of the other presupposed by subjective speech*.

Reading 'writing' in this more general fashion allows us to see the logic behind Hegel's otherwise bizarre assertion that writing standardizes phonetics into a common pronunciation through 'purity of articulation' (W 10, §459, Anon.). 'Writing' denotes the explicit positing of speech's presupposition that meanings must always be expressions of generally articulated marks of the other in order to be testable for recognition by



others. Language communities presuppose public, generally articulated signs that have the stability and universality sought in writing. In other words, speech presupposes its 'written', or generally articulated, form. Taking Hegel literally, here, would leave us with the absurd conclusions that the development of script somehow flattens out all subjective, affective or emotive aspects of speech, and that the vast majority of speakers in history (who lack knowledge of written script) never speak without a distorting accent.

A more charitable interpretation is that the examples of written script and flat accent are intended to remind us that subjective expression presupposes language signs that are not particular to any one individual speaker or hearer, but express the external, generally articulated standard of expression between subjects. All particular productions and receptions of terms presuppose a generally articulated set of words that receive expression in particular examples of discourse. 'Writing' posits the fact that the truly shared signs of language are particular to none and graspable by all. This 'writing', or the generally articulated signs of the other, is the essential presupposition behind any and all particular attempts at communication.

Thus, the linguistic principle articulated here does not demand development of an actual 'writing' or scriptural system. What it posits, rather, is that the subjective contingency present in speech forces mind to recognize its own presupposition that its lexicon actually consists of a generally articulated set of objective marks of the other. The subjective expressions that occur through writing presuppose for their functioning a general articulation without subjective voice, for the latter is always haunted by mishearing. Thus, what we usually call writing also presupposes a 'writing' of this general sort. What Hegel's analysis reveals is that all discourse presupposes an accent-less, pre-existent field of general articulation as its ground.<sup>23</sup>

Two clarifications are in order. First, while it runs contrary to Hegel's apparent desire to maintain the traditional hierarchy of speech and writing, the general principle of communication actually upsets the possibility of any hierarchy within linguistics. Speech provides the foundation for writing only by presupposing the general articulation of the latter. However, the generally articulated marks of the other (belonging to everyone and no one) only exist in and through the contingent (and always subjectively contaminated) expressions of individuals. Thus, the generally articulated standard presupposes particular expressive individuals, no less than the latter presupposes the former. Without writing, there can be no communicative speech, but without subjective

speech there would be no communication through generally articulated signs. Thus, (subjective) speech and (generally articulated) writing reciprocally presuppose each other. Secondly, it is therefore a matter of historical contingency whether or not an actual writing system arises within a community. Hegel's account need not be read as expressing the absurd requirement that every culture develop writing in order to progress to functional expression; rather it acknowledges the fact that subjective expression presupposes generally articulated signs exterior to all minds that make communication possible.

In other words, what communication presupposes is that each acquired word, as 'the synthesis [*Verknüpfung*] of the idea (as something internal) with the intuition (as something external), is itself external' (W10, §460). Acquiring a language means learning these generally articulated words which ground the expression of subjective thought. In other words, all expressed words must be recognized by the speaker, and recognizable by the hearer as the particular expression of a generally articulated mark of the other. Thus, rather than immediately externalizing our ideas into articulated sound expressions, we must now, as it were, reverse course, and consciously internalize the generally articulated words of the other in use within our community as the objective lexicon we will use to express our subjective meanings. In other words, true language acquisition arises when we internalize the generally articulated marks of the community to whom we seek to express our meanings. 'This internalization [*Erinnerung*]', Hegel claims, is called 'memory [*Gedächtniß*]' (W10, §460).

### Memory and Thinking

Memory, or the internalization of generally articulated signs of the other, is both the final stage of language acquisition and the transition to pure thinking. It both completes the progression from immediate, mute intuition to fully acquired language, and provides the specifically mental material from which pure, universal thinking will develop. Therefore, the developments of memory must be understood as progressively, and radically, altering the subjective, formal 'I'. Memory effects the transformation of mind from the contingent perspective of a particular subject to the determinately universal form of thinking. As such, it represents both one of the most important, as well as one of the most obscure, movements in the entire *Philosophy of Mind*. We will therefore have to proceed with caution.

The process of memory starts much like the earliest phase of representation, with the abstraction of intuited particulars into the form of the 'I', only now it is generally articulated signs of the other that are internalized as universal schemas. Out of the many particular examples of a word we hear in communal use, we abstract a generally articulated form for recognizing any and all instances of it. Thus, external, 'written' marks are the generally articulated types of the subjectively particular tokens that we experience. Language acquisition is dependent upon the abstraction of intentional forms for recognizing communal words into the 'I', which (as we know) holds its contents within its 'pit' at all times.

However, these forms are internalized as *words*, that is, as syntheses of articulated sound and subjective ideas. Through this process we create, as it were, a mental dictionary full of the words of our linguistic community, or memorize the articulated sound as synthesized with a particular idea. Thus, 'through the internalization [*Erinnerung*] of each ... sign [mind] raises the particular synthesis [*einzelne Verknüpfung*] [that is, the subjective synthesis of words as experienced] to a universal, i.e. permanent synthesis [*bleibende Verknüpfung*], in which name and meaning [*Bedeutung*] are objectively bound [i.e. an abstract, formal intention for hearing and expressing a generally articulated word]' (W 10, §461). Hegel reminds us that a word signifies as its meaning, or *Bedeutung*, a term that will become important in what follows. Here, subjective meanings are synthesized with intentional forms for generally articulated public words that express that meaning within the community. This first, *retentive* form of memory, then, 'makes the intuition, which the name primarily is, into a representation, so that ... meaning [*Bedeutung*] and sign are identified as one representation' (W 10, §461). Thus, we learn the lexicon of a communal language when retentive memory creates permanent syntheses in which 'name and meaning [*Bedeutung*] are objectively joined' (W 10, §461), and exist as intentional forms for recognizing contingently expressed words as particular tokens of memorized types. What is at work, here, then, is 'name-retaining memory [*das Namen behaltende Gedächtniß*]' (W 10, §461).

This drastically changes the content of the 'I', and in so doing reveals an essential aspect of linguistic memory. Formerly, we possessed a stock of images and ideas, but these could only be present to us either through an appropriate intuitive content, or through the imagination of one. However, because name-retaining memory *permanently* synthesizes subjective meanings with general articulations, what is henceforth called forth in recognition is our representation of the unity of the word. Thus, with a word, mind 'has and recognizes the thing' (W 10, §462), in that it recalls the appropriate meaning-intention as synthesized with



its generally articulated public word; correlatively, in the recognition of an intuited content, the same synthesis is recalled: that is, 'in the thing [mind has and recognizes] the word' (W 10, §462). Once we synthesize our subjective meanings with general articulated signs of the other, our meaning-intentions become *permanently linguistic*. As Hegel puts it, the word 'is the thing, in so far as it is available and has validity in the realm of representation' (W 10, §462).

Thus, within the advent of memory, mind 'has nothing more to do with an image which, as derived from intuition, is taken from an immediate, non-mental [*ungeistig*] existential determination [*Bestimmtsein*] of the intelligence' (W 10, §462, Anon.). When synthesized permanently with public words, we can have determinate access to meanings without recourse to either external intuition or subjective fantasy. The retention of a word allows us to represent a meaning to ourselves *as a generally articulated word*, or 'determinate being [*Dasein*] which is itself a product of intelligence' (W 10, §462, Anm.). Thus, memory is not only retentive; it is 'reproductive' (W 10, §462) in that it allows us to think and speak meanings in/as public words.

This further clarifies the nature of the abstract, internalized names. If we *completely* abstracted from their external, intuited aspect, we would be left again simply with the subjective idea. Thus, we would find ourselves compelled once again to create signs, confronted by the problems of sound, etc. What we abstract, then, are *representations of generally articulated words themselves*. Words must be abstracted as syntheses of meaning and generally articulated marks. The critical difference, here, is that words, unlike all previous intuitions, are *expressive productions of intelligence*. They are already an ideal content – created, acquired and utilized exclusively by subjects – and thus can be internalized as words. With memorized words, then, a mind both has, and knows that it has, an ideal, communally objective content within its subjective form. Thus, by internalizing communal words, we surpass mere representation and objectively (i.e., through general articulations of communally valued signs) 'think in names' (W 10, §462, Anm.).

This thinking is only objective, however, because the 'name, as the objective existence [*Existenz*] of content in intelligence, is the externality of [mind] within [mind] [*Äußerlichkeit ihrer selbst in ihr*]' (W 10, §462). Memorized names – as generally articulated signs of the other – are essentially public and common to all minds within a linguistic community, and therefore external to the internal realm of ideas and images. While individual subjects create the syntheses of meaning and articulated mark for themselves, they create them in conformity to the generally articulated

signs that are always of the other, and peculiar to no one. In other words, 'the inwardization of names as the intuition that [intelligence] itself produces [*der Erinnerung des Namens als der von ihr hervorgebrachten Anschauung*] is simultaneously the becoming external [*Entäußerung*] in which [intelligence] posits itself inside itself [*in der sie innerhalb ihrer selbst sich setzt*]' (W 10, §462, Anon.). By taking in objective signs of the other, mind transforms its interior content into something external, populating mind with objective content.

At this point, we have achieved a complete picture of Hegel's theory of language acquisition. Language is acquired in order to test the validity of subjective ideas against those of others through an objectively inter-subjective medium. This medium develops from purely subjective associations of sound and meaning through to the memorization of the generally articulated signs used by the community. Thus, acquisition gradually moves from early attempts at communication (e.g. babbling, mere imitation, etc.) to full speaking/hearing competency. Achieving this competency allows us to communicate our ideas to others in order to (we presume) determine their objectivity. If we stopped here, we would have accounted for how it is we come to speak with the linguistic competency that everyday communication presupposes.

This competency, however, does not yet satisfy the demands that led us to develop it. Mere 'linguistic competency', we should recall from Hegel's account of classical study, is not enough to truly satisfy the demands of consciousness, whether individuals realize it or not. What problem, then, remains for mind, and what further steps are required for finally shedding our subjective peculiarity?

Acquired words are syntheses of external sign and internal meaning. The images and ideas we seek to express, we must recall, are already (by virtue of their abstraction in mind) related by the imagination, and thus already determinately exist in contingent, subjective relations. As such, the words we acquire (by virtue of the ideas that form their synthesis) already possess, for us, subjective relations and connotations to each other. As Hegel puts it, the 'association of the particular names [to each other] lies in the meaning [*Bedeutung*] of the determinations of the *feeling, representing or thinking* intelligence, the series of which [mind] runs through in so far as it feels, represents or thinks' (W 10, §462, my emphasis). My acquired word 'apple', for example, is synthesized with my apple-meaning which already has the senses of 'on bloody heads in paintings', 'my pet' and 'red like Mars'. Thus, the words we internalize are not yet fully objective, as their meanings are connected in subjectively contingent senses. Moreover, the expressions of others are (at least to our

knowledge) no less affected by the contingency of subjective association, and so mere imitation of others will not determine their objectivity. Thus, names and their meanings are not yet true unities, as there still remains a difference between names (which are internalized as discrete, generally articulated signs of the other) and their meanings (which are already related to each other in subjectively peculiar senses).

In short, everyday linguistic usage demonstrates no objectivity (i.e. nothing determinately universal to all minds) in any of its relations. Such universality can only be won through the fully 'consummated assimilation [*durchgeführtes Aneignen*] [of names through] the sublation of every difference between meaning and name [*jenes Unterschiedes der Bedeutung und des Namens*]' (W 10, §463, my emphasis). In other words, we must divest our acquired, public words of their subjectively peculiar senses, eliminating all difference between name and meaning; only then can we internalize words as discrete, objective signs.

To clarify: in everyday language, words are used and experienced as possessing many associations or senses, that is, experiential, metaphorical, metonymical, etymological, etc. Hegel is calling our attention to the fact that all such senses lack (known) necessity, and result from subjectively and/or communally contingent experiences or representations. As such, even the very *form* of these relations of sense (qualitative predications, etc.) is thrown into question. In other words, while language is (meant to be) objectively of the other, the senses and relations expressed within it – in both form and content – are contingently subjective. Thus, the memorized words must be posited as lacking any relations to each other. In Hegel's enigmatic phrase, mind must posit 'itself [as] the universal space of names as such, i.e. of senseless words [*sinnloser Worte*]' (W 10, §463, my emphasis).<sup>24</sup>

As we saw in the Introduction, some right-wing commentators (W. Marx, Bodammer, McCumber) construe *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* as synonymous, arguing that names as such are words emptied of all meaning, and posited as mere sounds which can be re-'stamped' with new meanings, such that they freely express the pure content of philosophical thought. It should now be clear that such a reading runs contrary to Hegel's account of language acquisition in several important respects. Firstly, words are two-sided syntheses of articulated sound and subjective meaning. Names without meanings would simply be sounds, and names that receive new meanings are formed in a manner identical to any name (i.e. a unification of *Bedeutung* and *Ton*). As such, the very idea of a *meaningless* name is a contradiction in terms, and there is no more 'objective' manner of acquiring words. Thus, on this reading either names as such are not



names at all (since they lack meaning, and thus are not signs), or they are simply names like any other (since they are unities of meaning and sound). Secondly, Hegel argues that the act of memorizing words forges a *permanent* synthesis between idea and signifier. Thus, the right-wing reading essentially claims that linguistic memory concludes its work by unravelling its central accomplishment. Finally, language is acquired because mind presupposes objective expression to exist in and through communally shared words, not privately 'stamped' ones. A lexicon of non-communal words would simply exacerbate the problem language is acquired to solve. Thus, any reading of 'names as such' that posits some new 'kind' of word is at odds with Hegel's theory of language.

Magnus is closer to Hegel's text. She argues that what Hegel calls for is not the explicit emptying of the meanings of words, but the loss of meaningful 'connections between' them.<sup>25</sup> While Magnus does not draw this precise distinction,<sup>26</sup> this would imply that the switch from *Bedeutung* to *Sinn* ought to be read as a switch from *meaning* to *sense*, or the meaningful relations in which words exist in speech and thought. With the internalization of generally articulated signs of the other, the subjective element in language lies not in language itself, but in the associations between the synthesized meanings (or senses) already present within the particularity of subjects. In order to fully eliminate subjective particularity, that is, in order to eliminate all difference between meaning and name, one must posit one's words as completely senseless. On this reading, names as such are discrete syntheses of articulated *Ton* and *Bedeutung* (i.e. *names as such*, as distinct words) isolated from both their previously held associations and all of their possible relations within use (i.e. *names as such*, with no further determination).

However, Magnus also argues that names as such arise, not from an explicit positing, but from an unconscious forgetting: 'Now too familiar with its signifiers, the intelligence employs them without attending to the signified meaning that it has given them . . . It is, so to speak, simply too busy'<sup>27</sup> using memorized words to attend to their meaningful connection, and (on her reading) consequently switches its focus to the forms of relation. While this captures the general thrust of Hegel's move away from conscious usage towards mere retention, it fails not only to provide a response to the problem of subjective contingency (for words still exist, even if only habitually, in contingently peculiar senses), but also fails to explain why our unconscious *forgetting* of the various senses of words is a special kind of *memory*.

Names as such, rather, must result from our actively positing memorized words as discrete, unrelated syntheses of meaning and sound, or from our

re-memorizing words as completely external to each other. This is not an action performed by all minds (i.e. it does not arise simply from linguistic competency), but is necessary to completely overcome the subjective peculiarity within mental content. This process is both mind's 'highest inwardization of representation' (i.e. it inwardizes the most objective material) as well as its 'highest externalization [*Entäußerung*]' (i.e. the content of mind now consists solely of generally articulated signs of the other) (W10, §463, emphasis added). Mind, here, becomes a *mere* mind, holding *mere* names. Each name as such is determinately different from the others (as a general articulation synthesized with a specific meaning), but only determined as different and nothing more (as a senseless name as such). For its part, mind becomes a 'totally abstract' container within whose 'empty bond' names as such are simply held in some 'stable order' (W10, §463) (to prevent them falling once again into habitual relations) that is not guided by habit, fancy or subsumption. This final stage of memory, 'because of the *complete externality* in which the members of its [ordered form] stand in relation to each other, and the externality which [mind] itself is ... is called mechanical [*mechanisch*]' (W10, §463, emphasis added).

With mechanical memory, linguistic mind achieves the desired unity of its universal 'I' with an objective content, but now its content is a mere collection of names as such and its form is the empty bond holding them as discrete within mind. Thus, it is a completely abstract unity, without a determinate form to determine its content. Each word is a distinct unity of meaning and articulated sound, but within the mechanical form, nothing more can be determinately said or known about it. As Hegel (perhaps a bit polemically) says, mind's linguistic content 'has no more meaning [*Bedeutung*]' (W10, §464) because its words no longer indicate (*deuten*) meanings under any determined aspects. The words no longer signify 'meaningful' relations or determinations, both because the words no longer exist in relation and because the mind holding them is no longer that of a particular intentional subject. This 'I' could be any mind at all holding any linguistic content at all, because it has completely purged its form and content of the contingency of both external determination and subjective particularity. It is a merely abstract 'I' holding names as such that could be from any language whatsoever, in the mechanical form of a generic 'I'. In mechanical memory, there remains nothing subjectively or culturally particular, and thus mind's 'objectivity is no longer severed from its subjectivity' (W10, §464) in the unity of discrete mental content and abstract formal 'I'.

However, mind is a unity of objectivity and subjectivity only in so far as it could be any mind at all holding any linguistic content at all. This

is an abstract 'I' as such (i.e. the bare form of mind that could belong to any and all possible subjects) populated by a lexicon as such (i.e. public words that could belong to any and all languages). By mechanically memorizing words, we strip both the form and content of linguistic mind of any subjectivity, historicity, particularity, etc., thus 'purg[ing our mind] of its elements of partiality and particularity'<sup>28</sup> that prevent objective thinking.

In short, on the one hand, names as such are the kind of elementary units (i.e. words as specific syntheses of meaning and signifier) that any possible language would need to relate, and thus are the discrete building blocks of any and all possible determinate intentional expressions; and on the other hand, mechanical mind is the kind of mind (i.e. the generic, abstract, formal power) required to determine words into such expressions. As such, any formal relations that arise between the names as such held by the abstract 'I' will necessarily be those that determine words in any possible language possessed by any possible linguistic subject. In other words, mind is now in a position to determine whether or not there are objective forms, universal to all linguistic minds, for determining linguistic content. Such forms, should they exist, would constitute the necessary, universal grammatical structures through which words enter into relations of sense. Whatever relations (if any) can be determined to hold between names as such will not be limited to the specific subject determining them, or even to the specific lexicon that has been memorized; rather, the relations would be universal to any and all linguistic minds. In other words, mind can now set about determining whether or not there is a universal grammar.<sup>29</sup>

Of course, this is not a move made by most subjects. Few minds willingly break their linguistic habits by positing their acquired words as a mechanical collection of seemingly 'alien' terms without context or sense. Immersion in the immediacy and usefulness of everyday language leads most to scorn questions concerning the validity of the various relations within language as abstract and lifeless in comparison with the value of lived dialogue in the language in which we are 'at home'. Hegel's case for names as such, then, is akin to his cases for classical study, or the abstract study of logic, in that he contends – against the ordinary understanding – that the quest for objective knowledge requires us to alienate ourselves from meaningful, useful language in order to grasp the universal forms of determinate linguistic thought. It is not surprising, then, that Hegel reminds us of the close relationship between memory (*Gedächtniß*) and thinking (*Denken*) (W 10, §464). The positing of names as such is performed as rarely as the rigorous determination of



the logical forms of thought. Thus, what is posited here is not a stage of lexical acquisition required for everyday speaking/hearing competence. Rather, we are here confronting the requisite conditions for deducing the objective forms for relating words, or for demonstrating a universal grammar of objective thought. This new stage of mind, in which we undertake the deduction of whatever universal relations are necessary between mind's memorized content, is what Hegel calls logical, presuppositionless 'thinking' (*Denken*) (W10, §464). Thus, as Hegel intimated in the '*Rede*', the *mechanical moment* of language learning is attached to the arrangement of words in accordance with the immanent development of thought, or the development of logical grammar.

## Chapter 3

# The Deduction of Logical Grammar

In the last chapter, we saw mind's drive towards objectivity lead it to become the abstract, mechanical container of discrete, senseless words, or the equivalent of any mind at all holding any linguistic content at all. For mechanical mind, then, the memorized word 'lion', for example, has no senses to express anything determinate either about an intuited lion or the possible uses of the word 'lion' (e.g., that the 'lion' is 'ferocious', 'mammalian' or 'presently here'). Abstracted from our everyday usage, each word retained within mind stands in isolation from all others as a discrete individual.

However, mechanically retaining names tells us nothing about whether the orders within which they are held, or indeed whether *any* particular forms of arranging words, are necessary or universal. Consequently, if universal or necessary forms of linguistic relation are to be determined within language, the mechanical retention of words requires further determination. To reiterate: such formal relations, should they exist, would be those that would develop within any linguistic mind as such holding discrete names as such, and thus would not fall prey to subjective contingency, and could rightly be called a necessary, universal grammar. How, then, could such necessary grammatical relations arise within a merely mechanical mind?

If their deduction is to be necessary, they must arise strictly from the memorized lexicon as mere individuals existing within merely formal mind, or from mind *qua* mind holding words *qua* words. Thus, we must neither presuppose any meaningful relations between words, nor any formal categories or relations of grammar. Rather, we must trace the path of thinking that Hegel indicates as following the memorization of names as such.

This thinking (a) ... explains the individual out of [mind's] universality ...; [then] (b) explains that individual itself as a universal ... in judgment ... but (c) it [then] determines the content out of itself in the syllogism. (W 10, §467)

If a universal grammar does exist, its deduction will begin simply with particular names as such as individuals existing within mind, whose bare individuality will necessitate the predicating forms of judgment, whose relations will finally be justified through the rational form of the syllogism. Hegel, then, directs us from names as such directly to the 'Concept' section of the *Logic*.

Before beginning our grammatical investigation, however, we should note that this is not a standard picture of Hegel. Few commentators agree that either the *Logic* generally, or the 'Concept' in particular, concern language at all, except in an indirect fashion.<sup>1</sup> Those who read it as saying something about language argue that Hegel takes up an existent form of judgment, either from the history of logic,<sup>2</sup> or from lived speech,<sup>3</sup> and tries to provide dialectical derivations for them. Moreover, Hegel himself often writes as though he is simply explaining the necessity of given logical categories and relations like genus and species, contrary and contradictory, etc. However, if the relations and categories detailed in the 'Concept' are simply taken up from existent logic or language, this would relegate them to the realm of cultural or subjective contingency, thus stripping Hegel's project of universal necessity. In order to preserve the necessity of Hegel's deduction, and in particular to use it to resolve mind's drive towards objectivity, we cannot presume any existent logical or syntactical relations. At times, then, the reading presented below will differ drastically from standard readings,<sup>4</sup> for we will not depend upon Hegel's stock examples or explanatory models; rather, we will focus entirely on the necessary forms that develop from any content as such. For us, the 'Concept' must begin with pure individuals without explicit determination, for it is only if we read the pure individuals within the concept as being names as such that the set of formal relations developed in the 'Concept' can be deduced as the necessary forms of linguistic relation. Thus, the guiding contention of this reading is that the 'Concept' *implicitly* articulates a universal grammar, whose deduction we will *explicitly* develop.<sup>5</sup>

### The Individual and its Determination

We need not enter, here, into discussions of the 'Concept' as an overarching ontological unity, or of its relations to 'Being' and 'Essence'. While Hegel's 'Concept' can be understood to exist in different determinate forms (God, life, spirit, etc.), as well as in the unity of all concepts that is their absolute resolution, we are only concerned here with one form,



that of a formal '*Ich*' as the self-contained relation with its specific content (W6, p. 279/SL, p. 605). Thus, the 'Concept' section certainly applies to much more than just linguistics, but nonetheless can and should be read as Hegel's account of an abstract 'I' holding *geistig* content.

As we have seen, this 'I' is the merely formal, as yet indeterminate, power over its as yet unrelated names as such. Thus, the form of the 'I' is without structure beyond the mere retention of individuals as discrete and its individuals are without relation beyond mere difference from each other. At this stage, then, all that can be known of any name as such is that it is discretely individual, or a distinct unity of generally articulated mark and subjective meaning. Every name as such, *qua* discrete, is 'a qualitative *one* or a *this*' (W6, p. 300/SL, p. 621). A word's qualitative *distinctness*, however, presupposes its qualitative *difference* from the other words retained by mind. Each name is qualitatively distinct only in so far as it is distinguished from its others within the mind mechanically retaining them all: that is, only in so far as it is already in a distinguishing relation with others. Names as such, then, always already exist in a relation of mutual differentiation within their 'I'.

In other words, each individual name as such is not totally isolated from the others in a merely mechanical, 'external difference but [is only determined as different from them] in the difference of the concept' (W6, p. 301/SL, p. 622, trans. mod.). The qualitative distinctness of any word is only determined through the identity of the formal power in and through which it is distinguished from others. In short, the form/content relation of mind/words is that of an identity-in-difference: that is, that of names as such determined as distinct only through their distinguishing relation to each other within the 'I', and the formal 'I' as a self-relating unity in that it distinguishes its memorized names as such from each other. The explicit positing of this identity-in-difference is what Hegel calls the *judgment*.

Before we begin our analysis of judging, we should add a brief note on the relationship between propositions and judgments. Hegel occasionally distinguishes judgments from propositions (e.g. W6, p. 305/SL, p. 626) on the grounds that propositions express merely individual things (such as 'my friend has died') while judgments express universality in their predicate (e.g. 'violets are blue'). Confusingly, he further claims that propositions could be transformed into judgments if there is some uncertainty about their circumstance (e.g. whether the friend were really dead or merely in a coma), in which case the circumstance would be related to its wider universal (e.g. health, life, etc.). This muddled explanation seems to appeal to a third term, or syllogistic

reasoning, in order to make distinctions within a less complex stage of logic's development. Moreover, his examples of judgments often seem as particular as those of propositions (e.g. 'Gaius is learned'), and he even occasionally refers to judgments as propositions (*Sätze*). As such, it seems impossible to draw a sharp division between the two in Hegel's text. However, because Hegel claims that both the judgment and the proposition have 'a subject and a predicate in the grammatical sense' (W6, p. 305/SL, p. 626), and our task here is the development of formal grammatical relations, we shall presume that all propositions express a judgment, and that for our purposes their difference is therefore negligible.

### The Judgment of Existence

Judging is the posited identity-in-difference of distinct words distinguished through mind's identity, through which each individual is brought 'into existence as a determinate being' (W6, p. 302/SL, p. 623). At this stage, all that we can say about judging is that it determines one word as qualitatively distinct by differentiating it from others that it is not. Thus, judging begins simply by making this fact explicit: that is, by positing two distinct words as unified in a relation of identity-in-difference which determines one of them as qualitatively distinct. The linguistic judgment, then, begins as a relation between two words, not because of any grammatical or logical tradition, but simply because that is the minimum required for the determination of a distinct individual.

The judgment accordingly begins with the isolation of the word to be determined as qualitatively distinct within the identity. Hegel calls whatever word the judgment determines the 'subject'. While this allows him to begin his case in language familiar to most readers, it should not be construed as offering an explanation of the judgment as an abstraction from empirical language use. To preserve the universal necessity of the deduction, it cannot matter which word this is, and thus it need not be an individual substantive, etc. Thus, as we use terms like subject and predicate we must bear in mind that they refer, here, to names as such and thus 'what each is [in the judgment] cannot yet really be said; they are still indeterminate, for it is only through the judgment that they are to be determined' (W6, p. 302/SL, p. 623). At this stage, Hegel's grammatical terms are simply placeholders for any generic names whatsoever, and 'are something indeterminate that still awaits ... determination, and are, therefore, no more than names' (W6, p. 302/SL, p. 624). Thus, we shall

have to see how the subject–predicate relation arises and transforms itself through the progress of the judgment.

In this first stage of the judgment, the subject is simply the individual name as such that the relation determines as distinct, and is thus posited as 'that which *immediately* is' (W6, p. 303/SL, p. 624). The name identified as the subject appears to be self-subsistent, because it is isolated within the relating form of mind as that which is determinately distinct therein. However, as we know, a word is only determined as distinct in so far as it is distinguished from/related to another word, and that other word must also be a discrete, apparently self-subsistent word, or else it could not determine the distinctness of the first. Hegel calls this second distinct word the 'predicate'. Thus, the subject–predicate relation appears 'at first [to be] only a relation of self-subsistents ... a unity outside of which the self-subsistent sides persist as *extremes*' (W6, p. 304/SL, p. 625).

The earliest judgment, then, is simply the formal relation between any two words within mind that determines the subject as an immediate, distinct individual through a predicate related by mind to the subject as that which distinguishes its qualitative determination. Hegel calls this seemingly abstract and external relation the *judgment of existence*, within which the subject only receives its qualitative distinctness through its formal relation with another word, because the subject is determined as what it is only in and through its relation to the predicate, or what it is not. Thus, what this relation makes explicit is that the subject's determination is, in fact, the predicate, as it is the subject's distinguishing relation with the predicate that produces its qualitative distinctness. The *determinate* subject, in short, *is* the predicate, and the judgment thus posits the distinguishing relation as an *identity*.

Let us be explicit about this elementary judgment-form. In order to avoid the contingency of linguistic convention, it cannot be read in terms of any presupposed relation within meaningful language (e.g. that subjects are substantives while predicates are adjectives). What is being developed here is the grammatical form of determining identity in general. Thus, while it is true that Hegel generally employs stock examples drawn from logic texts ('Gaius is learned', 'the rose is fragrant', etc.) this mere form would also allow for such predications as 'the rose is learned' or 'the sleep is furious'. In other words, grammatical form is not the same thing as meaningful usage. This difference explains, for example, why judgments like 'the sleep is furious', while senseless, still 'feel' grammatically well structured.<sup>6</sup>

Which leads to one further clarification: the determining identity of the judgment posits the fact that the subject *is* the predicate. In the



actual expression of a language, this identity can be expressed through the explicit copula 'is' (most languages have some version of this option), or through surface-grammatical options such as inflection, position or attachment. The manner in which particular languages express this relation is empirically contingent; what is necessary and universal, here, is the determining identity of the judgment. Thus, beneath any and all 'surface' expressions lies a judgment which identifies a subject and predicate through an 'is', and this predicating form is the fundamental unit of any and all 'deep' or universal grammars.<sup>7</sup>

We can now begin to detail the basic 'syntactic' structure of the judgment. Any word posited as a predicate is posited as a formally relatable term that can be identified with subjects as their determination, and any word posited as a subject is posited as the kind of individual that can be qualitatively determined through such predication. Grammatically speaking, then, the predicate 'position' posits mind's formal determining *relation*, while the subject position posits the *individual* content that is qualitatively determined through predication. The predicate, in other words, posits the universality of the concept, or the determining relation of the formal 'I', while the subject stands against this relation in its determinate individuality. A predicate is universal because it can be related by mind to any and all possible subjects as their determination through the concept, and a subject is individual because it is determined as distinct through the predicate related to it. Hegel captures this in 'the proposition: *the individual is universal*' (W6, p. 312/SL, p. 632).

Again, one should not mistake this phrase as expressing a contingent point concerning the usual kinds of predications we make (e.g. that we often describe things we experience by predicates like their colour, and colour words are of wider applicability than count nouns, etc.).<sup>8</sup> The deduction is only objective because it develops the judgment-form. The predicate position is not universal because of the meaning of the words placed within it, but because it is the universal relation that determines any possible subject. Thus, 'the individual is the universal' should be read as expressing the *formal* identity of the judgment, in which one word is posited as determining through its universal 'relatability' to distinct subjects through mind's concept, and the other as individually determined through its posited identity with the first.

However, the mere formality of this identity reveals that no predicate has exclusive rights to the subject, because any word can determine the latter as qualitatively distinct. The identity determines the distinct subject, but in so doing reveals that the subject can be made determinate in any other posited identity. The subject can receive determination

from predicates in general, not just from the one with which it is first identified. Thus, the subject is determined as that which can be identified with any and all predicates, and therefore must be recognized as '*a thing of manifold properties, an actuality of manifold possibilities, a substance of such and such accidents*' (W6, pp. 313–14/SL, p. 633). The determinateness the subject receives through this judgment, then, is its ability to be identified with an infinite number of predicates. In other words, what the predicate determines is the subject's essential relatability through the concept, or its universality. Contrary to its former individuality, the 'subject is, therefore, in its own self the *universal*' (W6, p. 314/SL, p. 633) because, like the predicate, it is universally relatable through the conceptual form of the 'I'.

Conversely, any predicate identified with a determinate subject is only one of the many predicates that can be attached to it, or one individual possibility for the subject's determination. 'The rose is furious', for example, formally determines the 'rose' to be 'furious', but this 'predicate enunciates only *one* of the *many* properties [i.e., determining identities] of the rose' (W6, p. 314/SL, p. 633). The subject is still (an identity with) the predicate, but now the categories under which they fall have been reversed. Now, 'the subject is the predicate' is revealed to conceal the additional judgment, 'the *universal is the individual*' (W6, p. 314/SL, p. 633).

This reversal, however, reveals a contradiction in the very form of the judgment. The judgment initially posits the individual subject's determination as being (identical with) the universally relatable predicate. However, what the predicate determines through that identity is the universality of the subject. The original judgment's identity affirms that the subject *is* the predicate, but nevertheless reverses itself to determine that the subject is in fact *not* the predicate, as subjects can always be predicated otherwise, and thus are the '*spuriously infinite plurality* of [predicates]' (W6, p. 317/SL, p. 636).<sup>9</sup> In other words, because judgments are formed by relating specific words, the first judgment posits a specific identity ('the rose is furious') that the judgment's reversal contradicts ('the rose is not furious, it is red'). Thus, the judgment's identity 'must be *denied* and the positive judgment must be posited rather as *negative*' (W6, p. 317/SL, p. 636). Accordingly, a new grammatical form, which makes explicit the truth of the first, arises, which Hegel calls the *negative judgment*.

The negative judgment ('the subject is *not* the predicate') explicitly posits the fact that all positive judgments conceal an 'is not' along with their 'is', or a determinate difference between a subject and its posited predicate. Thus, while it can be either stated or concealed within actual

language use, the 'not' of the negative judgment, like the 'is' of the positive one, is a necessary aspect of universal grammar that is implicitly presupposed within the creation or parsing of any judgment. In other words, any and all languages must contain a negative determiner ('not') that posits the difference between the subject and the predicate presupposed by any and all judgments.

The subject is not the predicate precisely because any term affirmed of the subject is only one of many predicates through which it can receive its determination. The negation arises, then, not because the subject is determinate on its own accord, but because it *can be determined* by other predicates. Because subjects are only determined through their identity with predicates, a subject is only determined as *unrelated* to one posited predicate if it is no less determined as *identical* with another predicate. Put differently, every explicitly negative judgment concerning what the determinate subject *is not* (a predicate denied) implicitly contains a positive judgment concerning what the determinate subject *is* (a predicate affirmed). Thus, in explicitly positing that the subject is *not* the predicate (i.e. *this* posited predicate), the negative judgment implicitly posits the fact that the subject *is* the predicate (i.e. *that* posited predicate). Every explicitly negative judgment ('the rose is not red') implicitly presupposes that there is another predicate which is determined of the subject ('the rose is not red, it is furious', etc.). The 'is not' that determinately separates a subject from a predicate implies an 'is' that determinately identifies a subject with a predicate.

Thus, the negative relation revealed within positive predication does not simply determine that the subject is *not* (identical to) the predicate; to the contrary, it determines that the subject *is* (identical to) the predicate, but that any predicate denied and any predicate affirmed are determinately distinct (i.e., S is not-x, S is (not not-)y). In other words, it is not predication in general which is denied by the determinate negation, or affirmed by the determinate identification that follows it. What are determinately affirmed or denied in each case are *particular* predicates, each of which determines the subject differently. An explicitly stated positive judgment, then, is no less a negation of all other predicates, while within an explicitly stated negative judgment, for example, 'the rose is not red, it is assumed that it has a [predicate], but a different one' (W 6, p. 322/SL, p. 640). The truth of the negative judgment, then, is that the subject is determined through its specific possible predicates (i.e. the other memorized names as such), but that its identity with each of them posits a different determining relation of it (i.e. a distinct determining identity), to the exclusion of others.



Thus, the judgment-form itself reveals that any and every possible judgment determines that the subject is not just any predicate, but the one that produces the particular determination affirmed by the specific posited judgment. All possible judgments posit an individual subject as an identity with a particular predicate, which produces a distinct determination of it, to the exclusion of the subject's other possible predicates. Thus, the positive outcome of the negative judgment is that '*the individual is a particular*' (W 6, p. 318/SL, p. 637); that is, every judgment qualitatively determines an individual subject through a particular predicate in a manner specific to the posited relation. The universal predicating relation of the judgment posits an infinite number of specific determining relationships for the subject, each of which expresses a distinct determining identity.

As such, however, the judgment has failed to achieve its original purpose. The subject was meant to be an immediate individual that would be determined as its distinct self through the predicate. The judgment's determining identity, however, has been revealed as that which posits specific determining identities, each one of which is distinct to the predicate. Thus, the judgment does not determine the subject as distinct; it posits determining identities of the subject that are specific to the *related predicates*, rather than to the subject. The subject is posited as identical to a series of specific predicates, each of which, precisely because it produces a specific determining identity, is determinately distinct from the subject. The predicates, then, are themselves individuals whose determination as such is posited by the judgment. Consequently, the judgment does not individuate the subject through a determining identity specific to it, but merely attaches the subject to an individual predicate with its own specificity and determinacy, which determines the posited identity. In other words, the judgment was supposed to determine the subject as 'an individual, [or] the negativity that relates not to an other, ... but only to itself' (W 6, p. 323/SL, p. 640, italics removed). However, the very form of the judgment demonstrates that all predicates are themselves individuals that posit distinct determining identities, and thus each 'is therefore a predicate that does not correspond to the subject' (W 6, p. 323/SL, p. 640). As such, *no* judgment determines the individuality of the subject through its identity with a predicate.

In short, the predicate does not qualitatively determine the individual subject. In order to do justice to the subject's individuality, therefore, mind must posit the failure of this 'external' form of predication, for none of its possible predicates can determine the subject's individuality. In other words, we must once again declare that the subject is not the

predicate. Formerly, we negated the specific predicate of the subject, while retaining 'a positive relation of the subject and predicate [in] the universal sphere of the latter' (W6, p. 324/SL, p. 641), or the predicating relation in general. Now, however, what requires negation is 'the *whole extent* of the predicate [such that there is] no longer any positive relation between it and the subject' (W6, p. 324/SL, p. 641). The positing of this general negation of all predication, Hegel calls the *infinite judgment*.

The infinite judgment posits the complete lack of relation between the extremes of any possible judgment, for example, 'the rose is not an elephant, the understanding is not a table, and the like' (W6, p. 324/SL, p. 642). Thus, the infinite judgment is, at first, a negative judgment which denies every possible predicate of the subject as external to its determination. However, as we now know, all negative judgments presuppose a positive judgment which affirms a specific determination of the subject that excludes the predicates denied. If all predicates are denied, however, there is no term through which to determine the subject other than itself. As such, the positive infinite judgment states that the subject is not the predicate because it is to be identical to nothing but itself, for example, 'the rose is the rose' or 'the individual is individual' (W6, p. 325/SL, p. 642).

However, this positive infinite judgment does not really consist of a subject-predicate relation, for it simply asserts the fact that the subject is a determinate, self-identical individual. It simply says that the subject is itself, without the distinguishing relation with other terms required for qualitative determination. Thus, on the one hand, in the negative infinite judgment, predication itself is denied, positing that the subject/predicate 'difference is ... *too great* for it to remain a judgment [for] subject and predicate have no positive relation whatever to each other' (W6, p. 325/SL, p. 643); on the other hand, 'in the positively infinite judgment ... only identity is present and owing to the complete lack of difference it is no longer a judgment' (W6, p. 325/SL, p. 643). Neither the positive, nor the negative infinite judgments, then, are really judgments at all, and we have returned once again to the apparently unrelated existence of words within mind.

Of course, we have already seen how this mere existence progressively determines itself into the form of the judgment, and thus we cannot simply return to the beginning of thinking, for we would merely be caught in a redundant oscillation between isolated names and unsuccessful predications. The individual still requires determination, and this determination must come through the identifying relation between names as such. Thus, we must reflect upon what has taken place to see how we came full circle.

In order to determine the individual, or subject, within mind, we saw that it needed to enter into a differentiating relationship with another term, or predicate. Because the subject's determination as itself was in fact the predicate, the judgment-form was that of determining identity. This determining identity, however, was revealed to have been external to the predicate, as an independently existing individual. Thus, subject must be identified with predicates (i.e. 'the subject *is* the predicate'), but the mere judgment form relates external predicates which bear no determinate relation to the subject (i.e. 'the subject *is not* the predicate').

The problem, then, is that the necessary judgment-form does not merely posit the qualitative distinctness of a subject, but in fact posits the subject as determinately identical to a predicate. Judgments posit a determining identity between extremes, but there is nothing in the merely formal relation between the extremes that demonstrates the identity between them. Thus, if the judgment is to genuinely determine the subject, it must posit a 'unifying' (W 6, p. 326/SL, p. 643) relation, rather than merely formal identity, between the terms. In other words, the judgment must explicitly posit 'what the *copula* of the judgment contains' (W 6, p. 326/SL, p. 643) which is a determinate unity between the terms predicated, not a distinguishing difference. The distinct predicates posited of a subject, then, cannot be merely externally related individuals, but must themselves express the qualitative determination of their subject. Judgments identify distinct terms, and therefore the unity between them cannot just distinguish a subject from its others, but must be reflective of the qualitative individuality of the subject. Hegel calls this newly posited unity between the extremes the *judgment of reflection*.

### The Judgment of Reflection

The judgment of reflection posits the outcome of the previous judgment: that is, that any posited predicate must reflect the qualitative determination of the subject with which it is identified. This judgment begins, then, with the same form as the last judgment: that is, 'S is P' or 'the individual is the universal', but now the posited predicate must 'express an essential determination' (W 6, p. 326/SL, p. 643) of the posited subject. In this *singular judgment* the subject is a qualitatively distinct individual, or a 'this' that is to remain identical with itself in the judgment, and the predicate, while a distinct term, is to express an essential determination of the subject. It can, therefore, 'be more precisely expressed as "this is an essential universal"' (W 6, p. 328/SL, p. 645, trans. mod.). Since we



cannot presuppose any meaningful relations, it is the judgment-form that must express this determinate connection.

It is for this reason, however, that the judgment falls immediately into contradiction. The judgment asserts that the 'this' under consideration is an essential universal, or that the predicate is a determination of the individual subject. However, the predicate is an individual in its own right, brought into relation with the subject by the form of predication, and the form does not limit the predicate relation simply to determining the posited subject. Even though the predicate must be an essential determination of the subject, there is (as we know from the judgment of existence) nothing in the mere 'S is P' judgment-form which prevents it from playing that role for other subjects. While the singular judgment expresses the fact that predication is not completely open since it must reflect the determination of the subject, there is as yet nothing in the judgment-form to tell us where the limit for predication lies: that is, how many subjects can be reflected by that essential universal. Thus, the judgment, even when predicating essential universality, can determine the same predicate as the essential universal of other subjects. In other words, no essential universal is simply identical with an individual subject, or 'this', as the judgment asserts. Consequently, like the positive judgment of existence, the singular judgment of reflection reverses itself into a negative judgment, because the individual subject is not identical with the essential universal predicate.

Like every negative judgment, however, this one presupposes a positive judgment that expresses the 'non-thisness' of the predicate's open subject, or the multiple (although now known as not completely open set of) possible subjects for the predicate. Thus, in negating the singular judgment, we make explicit another positive judgment, this one regarding the *particularity* of the number of possible subjects, now a set of indeterminate number. Since the content cannot be the ground of this determination, the form of judging must be changed to reflect the newly revealed fact that the 'subject is, therefore, "some of these" or "a particular [indeterminate] number of individuals"' (W 6, p. 329/SL, p. 645, trans. mod.). Rather than capturing the determinacy of 'this subject', this new judgment-form (the *particular judgment*) must express the indeterminate plurality of possible subjects. As such, this alteration of form requires the development of grammatical markers or syncategorematic terms ('these', 'some', 'many', 'several', etc.) which express the indeterminate number of subjects for which the predicate can be the essential universal. Once again, it does not matter how these terms are contingently expressed, but the universal form of grammatical relation demands that all languages somehow be able to express such an indeterminate plurality.

Having developed a new form for judging, it is only natural for mind to seek, since this is the judgment's task, to determine individuals through it. When applied to subjects, the new form produces partial determinations like 'some people are happy', 'some things are useful', etc. The particular judgment, then, posits a determinate identity between some instances or uses of a name and an essential universal, and as such presupposes that (at least some) subjects can be pluralized. Thus, it is grammatically necessary that subjects can be pluralized, for the particular judgment posits the fact that some individuals are an essential universal ('some S are P').

However, while the particular judgment "some individuals are a universal of reflection", appears at first as a positive judgment, ... it is negative as well' (W 6, p. 329/SL, p. 645, trans. mod.). According to a logic familiar to us by now, 'these are the essential universal' presupposes a negative judgment excluding 'those are not the essential universal', e.g. the 'judgment: "some men are happy" involves the immediate consequence: "some men are *not* happy"' (W 6, p. 329/SL, p. 646). Consequently, this judgment develops further syncategorematic terms ('those', 'are not') that correspond to the indeterminate number of others excluded by any particular predication.

Thus, the predicate of either the positive or negative particular judgment is not the essential determination of its subject, for it is not posited of the subject itself, but only some particular uses or instances of it. As such, reflective predications do not necessarily reflect the subject, but only contingently do so, for the relation is only held in some instances and not others. The particular judgment does not deliver the essential determination of the subject that we are seeking, then, for it is not posited of the subject *itself*. However, we have seen that returning to the mere individuality of the subject leads us back to the particular judgment, and thus would not resolve the problem. So, if we are to determine the subject itself without returning to its mere individuality, we must build upon the new form of judgment: that is, the plural set of individuals of which essential universals can and cannot be predicated. If some predicates contingently only apply to 'these' uses of subjects, and not 'those', then we can infer that a predicate which belongs to the subject itself would apply to *any* instances of it. In other words, from the opposition between 'these' and 'those', we derive the concept of their unity, or 'all'. Thus, a new syncategorematic term ("all" [which] means all *individuals*' [W 6, p. 331/SL, p. 647]) develops which formally expresses the totality of individuals to whom the predicate belongs, and thus we have the new judgment form 'all S are P', or the *universal judgment*.

This form of judging, then, posits an essential universal as belonging to all possible cases of individuals. Such a universal would apply to every individual case or 'this'. Such a predicate, then, would by no means be contingently attached to the subject, but would express a determination of the subject itself. In the move to allness, then, the 'subject has stripped off the form determination of the judgment of reflection which passed from *this* through *some* to *allness*; instead of "all men" it is henceforth to be said "man"' (W 6, p. 333/SL, p. 649, trans. mod.). As such, we have made an 'advance in the *determination of the copula*' in that the 'subject in this determination becomes identical with the predicate [and therefore S and P] have coalesced into the copula' (W 6, p. 334/SL, pp. 649–50, trans. mod.). Thus, we have reached the end of mere reflection, and return once again to the unity of the subject and predicate (or 'S is P'), but this time recognizing that their determining identity expresses a necessary relation. This 'intrinsic and explicit connection constitutes the basis of a new judgment, the *judgment of necessity*' (W 6, p. 335/SL, p. 650).

### The Judgment of Necessity

The judgment of necessity once again posits the identity between subject and predicate within the judgment (i.e. 'the subject is the predicate'), but now 'the copula has the meaning of *necessity*' (W 6, p. 336/SL, p. 651, trans. mod.). Hegel, therefore, calls it the *categorical judgment*. However, because the content cannot be used to make this connection for us, it must be reflected in the form, and as yet nothing in the judgment's form indicates a necessary relationship.<sup>10</sup> There is no difference between the form of the categorical judgment and those of the positive or the singular. Thus, judgment form must again be altered such that it expresses the required necessity.

To say that the subject is necessarily the predicate is to say that there is no case of the subject which is not the predicate. In other words, a categorical judgment claims that if the subject is posited within a judgment, then its essential universal is necessarily posited as well. This is formally captured by the introduction of new syncategorematic terms, specifically 'if ... then'. Thus, a judgment whose relationship is posited as necessary, for example, 'this human is mortal', has its necessity in the presupposition and concealment of the *hypothetical judgment*, 'if this is a human, then it is mortal'. Under the form of the hypothetical judgment 'each extreme is posited as equally the being of another' (W 6, p. 337/



SL, p. 652), and as such, it 'can be more precisely characterized as a relationship of *ground* and *consequent*, *condition* and *conditioned*', etc. (W6, p. 338/SL, p. 652). The hypothetical judgment formally posits two terms as a necessary identity.

Once again, however, the form of the judgment reveals itself as unable to explicitly posit the requisite connection between subject and predicate. The form 'if S, then P' does no more than 'some S are P' to determine what predicated determinations actually belong to the subject. The form remains indeterminate for its task, then, for it expresses a necessary relationship as holding between any terms slotted into the syntactical positions (e.g. 'If this is a lion, then the letter Q is frozen'). What is required, then, is a form that expresses the fact that not all predicates hold necessarily for the subject, or a formal determination of the fact that the subject has its own specific set of necessary determinations.

This new form must express (1) that a subject has necessarily determining predicates and (2) that not all predicates necessarily determine it. Put differently, it is either the case that a predicate belongs to a subject or it does not, but it is the case that some predicate(s) necessarily belong(s) to the subject. The form that best captures this is 'S is either P1 or P2 or P3 or P4' (G. W6, p. 339/SL, p. 653). The new *disjunctive judgment*, then, introduces new syncategorematic terms, specifically those of 'either ... or' that capture the necessary relation of subjects to some predicates, but not to others.

While disjunction formally captures the fact that the subject is necessarily determined by some predicates, but only by its own predicates, it also reveals a further presupposition. If the posited predicates are either the determinations of an individual subject or not, then they all must be predicates that can be determinations of subjects. In other words, the disjunctive form presupposes that any of the predicates slotted into it are determinations of subjects, it is simply unclear whether they are determinations of this individual subject. Thus, in terms of the pure form of judging, 'S is either P1 or P2 or P3 or P4' presupposes 'S is both P1 and P2 and P3 and P4'. Thus, disjunction presupposes conjunction, that is, the disjunctive judgment has both a negative (i.e. 'either ... or') and a positive (i.e. 'both ... and') form, each of which demands syncategorematic terms, or equivalent surface expressions of this relation.

Let us take a closer look at the result of this development: the positive disjunctive judgment ('both ... and') formally expresses that all terms not posited as the subject of a judgment can be predicates within it, while the negative disjunctive judgment ('either ... or') formally expresses that only those specific to the posited subject's determination should be predi-

cated. That is, disjunction affirms (1) that when a term is posited as a subject, all other terms (*qua* distinct) are *not* the subject of the judgment, and therefore *can* be formally posited as its predicate and (2) that *only* those that are actually determinations of the subject *should be* so posited. In other words, a subject must be determined through all other terms as its predicates, but the predicates are all distinct and relate to the subject differently, and thus not all determining identities equally hold of the subject. The disjunctive judgment, then, expresses in its very form the reciprocal determination of specific words within mind with which we began, i.e. that S is (identical with) some P that determines it as itself. As such, 'the *reciprocal determination* of the *disjunctive* terms ... reduces to the difference of the concept' (W6, p. 342/SL, p. 656), for this judgment expresses the predicating 'identity-in-difference' of words within mind.

However, this relation is not precisely the same, for the development of the judgment-form has altered our understanding of the nature of the concept. Words are not simply related in mere difference, but are identified with each other as subject and predicate, and this relation posits a determining identity whose specific predicate(s) should express determinations of the individual subject. Thus, we have not simply returned to the original 'identity-in-difference' relation, but have explicitly determined that this identity is to express the subject's qualitative determination through appropriate predicates. 'The subject is the predicate' is the necessary form of judgment, but this relation must be filled by terms which actually are a determinate identity. Thus, the form of judging is posited as that which must relate linguistic contents that actually constitute an identity, or (what amounts to the same thing) the very form of the concept's relation of distinct terms demands filling by content adequate to the form. With this, we move to a new judgment, that Hegel calls the *judgment of the concept*.

### The Judgment of the Concept

In this 'judgment, the concept [itself] is laid down as the basis' (W 6, p. 344/SL, p. 657, trans. mod.) for relating individual terms. In other words, this judgment asserts that the form of predication is that through which words receive determination, and that the related words should themselves be such that they reflect the form. In other words, 'S is P' is the necessary form through which words are determinately related, but those words related through it should have qualitative determinations that are appropriate for that form (i.e. the subject and predicate

should be appropriate to the posited relation, be it external, reflective or necessary). We once again, then, return to the original judgment form ('S is P' which, as we have seen, is used to posit all determinate judgment relations), this time knowing that the predicating form presupposes a 'fit' between the subject and predicate.

Of course, the actual correspondence to the formal determination cannot be known through this form. Thus, while this judgment expresses the relating form of the concept, any particular words actually posited through it may or may not be adequate to it. This judgment is *assertoric*, because it merely asserts that the subject and predicate *should* be an identity through the form without demonstrating it. This assertoric judgment is, essentially, 'an *ought-to-be* [*ein Sollen*] to which the [words] may or may not be adequate' (W 6, p. 344/SL, p. 657). When we posit words through the conceptual form of predication, we are asserting that their determinations ought to reflect the posited relation, but nothing in the relating form guarantees it. If the assertoric judgment expresses that the subject ought to relate to the predicate of the judgment in accordance with the form, then it presupposes some kind of *evaluation* of whether or not the subject and predicate are good or suitable ones for the posited relation. Thus, the assertoric judgment could be expressed as an evaluative proposition which assumes this relation, for example, 'S is "good, bad, true, ... correct"' (W 6, p. 344/SL, pp. 657–8) for the posited predication.

Once again, then, the form is inadequate to its task. While the form asserts that the subject and predicate should be in a good, true or correct relation, it does nothing to weed out bad, untrue or incorrect ones. It is a mere assertion without justification, and as such, 'the assurance of the [categorical] judgment is confronted with equal right by its contradictory' (W 6, p. 347/SL, p. 660). Thus, the form must be altered again to reflect the fact that, while the form asserts that the words posited within it should reflect the determination of the form, they do not necessarily do so. This new form is called the *problematic judgment*.

The 'problematic judgment is the [assertoric] in so far as it must be taken positively and negatively' (W 6, p. 347/SL, p. 660); that is, it formally expresses that terms posited within the judgment may or may not be 'good' for the posited relation. As such, its form is 'S is possibly P'.<sup>11</sup> This judgment makes explicit in its form the presuppositions not only of the assertoric judgment, but those of the particular ('some are ... some are not') and the hypothetical ('if ... then, both ... and') judgments, each of which possesses positive and negative modes grounded in the uncertainty of the fit between subject and predicate first revealed in the mere positive judgment. This new judgment explicitly expresses the essential fact



that every posited judgment determines a subject through a predicate, but that it is 'problematic [or uncertain] whether the predicate is to be coupled with a certain subject or not' (W6, p. 347/SL, p. 660).

Before examining the consequences of this form, we should pause to note what aspects of grammar the categorical (which simply asserts that S is P) and the problematic (which acknowledges that S may or may not be P) judgments develop. These relations posit what are generally referred to as linguistic modes or moods; specifically the indicative mood which leads to the development of the speculative. These moods are expressed differently in different languages and thus their surface expression, as usual, does not concern us. We need only note the fact that it is linguistically necessary that language be able to express the modal aspects (actuality, possibility and, from their transition, the fact that the possible should be actual) expressed by these judgments.

The problematic judgment predicates something of the subject, which may or may not fit with it. As such, the problematic element concerns the individual subject, for it is not clear whether or not the subject's determination fits with the predicate asserted of it. In other words, it is the subject's own qualitative constitution (i.e. the word that it is) that 'contains the *ground* of its *being* or *not being* what it *ought to be*' (W6, p. 348/SL, p. 661) in the specific posited judgment. The meaningful constitution of the subject is that which evaluates the predicate's 'fit'.

Thus, the judgment posits the fact that the subject is to be predicated only in relation to its own constitution; that is, it is to 'appear twice' in the judgment, which is the 'original partition' (*Ur-Teil*) of the subject into two; its individual self and a predicate which expresses (one of) its determination(s). The posited predicate only 'fits' the subject if the latter's meaningful constitution is such a determinate identity with it. When a judgment *does* identify a predicate and a subject whose constitutions are a good fit, we have resolved the problematic aspect of the judgment. In such a judgment, it is not uncertain whether or not the subject is the predicate; to the contrary it is *necessary* that it be so. Thus, we have moved to a new form of predication that Hegel calls the *apodeictic judgment*.

The apodeictic judgment posits the fact that each judgment determines a 'fit' between the judgment-form and the linguistic content. It is 'the *truth of the judgment* in general' (W6, p. 349/SL, p. 662), for it posits the presupposition judging itself, that is that the content that fills the judgment's extremes must be adequate to its identifying form. A judgment expresses an identity between two terms that ought to be correct, and in order for the judgment to be a good or correct one, the related content must correspond to the posited formal relation. The grammatical mode of

apodeictic judging, then, formally expresses the fact that every judgment presupposes not just that 'S is P' or 'S may or may not be P', but 'S must be P'.

In the apodeictic judgment, however, the subject is '*split* into its *ought-to-be* [i.e. the predicate posited of it] and its being [i.e. its meaningful constitution which must correspond to what the judgment posits of it]' (W 6, p. 350/SL, p. 662, trans. mod.). It is the correspondence between what the judgment posits of the subject and the subject's own determination that genuinely determines the subject through the judgment form. Thus, the apodeictic judgment posits the fact that the subject and predicate must correspond. It does not tell us, however, how they can correspond, or what relations can and do hold between necessarily related subjects and predicates. In other words, the formal assertion of a necessary identity does not reveal the reason that justifies the assertion of necessity. In order to properly distinguish a necessary coupling from a merely asserted, or problematic one we need to understand not just *that* a specific coupling is necessary, but *why* it is, or the *reason* for their connection, or the explicitly '*determinate* relation of subject and predicate' (W 6, p. 351/SL, p. 663). Thus, the apodeictic judgment, as the truth of judging in general, reveals its presupposition of a determinate, explicit reason that justifies the connection between the extremes. As such, 'the judgment has become the *syllogism*' (W 6, p. 351/SL, p. 663).

Before we move on to the syllogism, let us briefly recap the grammatical significance of the judgment. We have seen that Hegel, like the so-called Cartesian linguists, argues that the fundamental grammatical form is that of the predicating judgment. By extension, we can say that more complex sentences are, at bottom, collections of transformed judgments (e.g. 'colourless green ideas sleep furiously' would be a transformation of the judgments 'the ideas are green and colourless', 'the ideas are sleeping' and 'the sleeping is furious'; 'the invisible God created the visible world' would be a transformation of 'God is invisible', 'God has created the world' and 'the world is visible', etc.). Thus, the universal grammatical relation is the predicating determination of words through each other through judgment.

This bare form led to the development of universally necessary syncategorematic terms ('not', 'some', 'if ... then', 'either ... or', 'both ... and', 'may or may not') that formally expressed different determining relation words (i.e. relations of merely external difference between otherwise unrelated words; contingent reflection of some, but not all uses of words; and necessary predication of all uses of words). These constitute the universal grammatical forms for formulating distinct determinate

relations between terms, but all are rooted, and therefore expressible, in the basic predicating form. Finally, the posited degree of certainty (indicative actuality, speculative possibility, apodeictic necessity) that holds within these relations is expressed through a series of universally necessary grammatical moods.

The development of these grammatical forms, however, reveals that the positing of contents in a judgment-form always presupposes a corresponding relation of content between the particular terms related within it. However, the judgment-form itself cannot determine what kinds of correspondence actually do hold between terms. In order to determine how terms can actually correspond to the form, we need to offer a reason for their posited relation. This demands a new relational form, which posits the kinds of determinate correspondence that hold between terms. It is this form which constitutes the syllogism.

### Inference, or the Syllogism in General

Before developing Hegel's account of syllogistic relations, we should add a brief word on their grammatical significance. In employing the examples that he does, Hegel might appear to be arguing that the judgment gives way to the sets of related judgments that are traditionally known as syllogisms, that is, to three separate propositions, the last of which contains a 'therefore' marking it as a conclusion, as in Hegel's famous example:

Gaius is a man,  
All men are mortal,  
Therefore Gaius is mortal.

It would appear, then, that we have left grammar for logic.<sup>12</sup>

This, however, is an erroneous picture of Hegel's text. While the relations of which he speaks certainly can be expressed in separate sentences, these classical syllogisms are expressed in an 'unprofitable form ... that splits the relation of the terms into separate premises and a conclusion distinct from them' (W 6, p. 358/SL, p. 669). What has been determined through the judgment is that subjects and predicates correspond to each other due to some aspect of their specific constitutions, or for specific reasons. As such, 'everything is a *syllogism*' (W 6, p. 359/SL, p. 669). The syllogism formally expresses not a set of distinct propositions, but rather a single proposition that explicitly includes within itself



the justifying rationality of its predication, or the 'because' presupposed by the predication itself. Grammatically, then, what is introduced with the syllogism is the concept of *clauses* which depend upon or are depended upon by each other.

Syllogisms, then, relate main clauses to their subordinates clauses, or predications through their reason or specifying determination. Thus, in what follows, unlike Hegel, we will eschew all reference to the makeshift form of logic and, rather than develop a thorough defence of the forms of syllogistic reasoning, we will explore the traditional syllogistic forms as rational predications.

### The Syllogism of Existence

As we have seen, the syllogism is developed to make formally explicit the specific justification for the posited relation between the extremes of a judgment. Taking up, then, the basic judgment-form within which the subject is the individual (I) and the predicate is the universal (U), the syllogism's form posits the fact that these 'extremes ... are united in a *different* third term' (W 6, p. 355/SL, p. 667) which is invoked to express the relation between them. This third term must express the specific reason that unites the I and the U, or the determination that relates the subject to the predicate. The third term, then, expresses a particular (P) determination which connects I to U. This basic syllogistic form is short-handed as I-P-U.

The connection formed between I and U, then, is grounded in the fact that I is P (or that P expresses one of the determinations of I) and that P is U (or that U can be identified with P). The relations of P to the extremes, then, form judgments, but the P plays different roles in each; specifically, 'in relation to the universal, the particular is subject; in relation to the individual it is predicate; or in relation to the former it is an individual, in relation to the latter it is a universal' (W 6, p. 357/SL, p. 668). Because I relates to P as subject to predicate, and P to U as subject to predicate, the relation can be deduced through P that the I can be predicated by U. In other words, I is U *because* it is P, *which* is U.

In everyday language (using Hegel's stock example), this form can receive many expressions: 'Gaius is a man, which is mortal', 'Because Gaius is a man, he is mortal', 'Gaius, as a man, is mortal', etc. but such a reason is always presupposed behind any predication, expressed or not. An I, or subject ('Gaius'), because it possesses a determination P ('man'), is determinately some other predicate U ('mortal'), and the

relation is expressed through some form of dependency that expresses the rationality of the second determination. How this is expressed in language (by clause order, relative pronouns, syncategorematic terms, implication, or even three distinct judgments) is, of course, contingent. Our concern is solely with the syllogistic form that posits the concealed justification for predication presupposed by all judgment. In other words, the 'meaning of the syllogism is that [a posited judgment is] not a relation effected by the *mere copula* or the empty *is*, but one effected by the determinate middle term which is pregnant with content' (W 6, pp. 358/SL, p. 669). The syllogism formally posits the specific determining identity between a subject and predicate through another term.

This is, however, the problem with the mere form of the syllogism. In it, the judgment relation, which requires rational determination because of the insufficiency of its form, is only determined through the predicating judgments that form I-P and P-U. There is therefore nothing in the form that can tell us which specific P to posit of I, or how to move from any specific P to a justified U. In other words, the mere form of the syllogism, by connecting two merely formal judgments, tells us nothing about which specific predications are actually rational, or which kinds of relations between terms are justified. The I of the syllogism, like the subject of the mere judgment, 'possesses an infinite number of [possible] determinatenesses ... each of which therefore may constitute a middle term for it in a syllogism' (W 6, p. 359/SL, p. 670), and each posited middle term likewise 'contains several predicates itself, and [thus] the individual can be united through the same middle term with several universals' (W 6, p. 359/SL, p. 670). As such, the mere form of the syllogism allows for contradictory rational predications for the same I, for, 'however fully [a merely formal syllogism's] correctness may be conceded ... the fact always remains that there are still other middle terms from which the exact opposite can be deduced with equal correctness' (W 6, p. 361/SL, p. 671). Thus, the mere form of the syllogism, like the mere form of the judgment, produces contradictions because it can be filled with any contingent contents.

One could, of course, try to mediate each of the judgments by another particular in accordance with the form of the syllogism, but this would only compound the problem by producing two more syllogisms, and 'these two new syllogisms [would] in turn yield between them four premises which demand four new syllogisms; these [would] have eight premises' (W 6, p. 363/SL, p. 673) and so on, *ad infinitum*. The parts of the syllogism require mediation, 'but mediation in the form just mentioned [I-P-U] only results in the re-appearance of the relationship that was to be sublated' (W 6, p. 363/SL, p. 673).

Thus, any actually posited syllogism of this form is contingent and singular, as it could always have been constructed otherwise. If there is any determinate connection between the terms, it does not come through the form (for it offers no determinate reason for the predication), but through the contingent content. It is simply because *this* I is posited as possessing *this* P, which is posited as *this* U that the syllogism forges a rational connection. In other words, the relations I-P and P-U both express singular, immediate relations, and it is thus contingent, immediate individuality that really forges the relation. Thus, a new form of the syllogism is required that expresses contingent individuality as the reason for connecting the extremes.

This second figure of the syllogism formally expresses the fact that the terms in the first were only related through their contingent, immediate individuality: that is, a 'this'. Thus, its form must express the contingency of the relation by making the immediate individual, I, the middle term. The new related judgments, then, are P-I and I-U. While the I-U relation takes the standard form of a judgment, the first relation produces a contradiction. It places P in the subject position, and posits the fact that a particular determination is I, or an immediate, contingent 'this'. As we know well from the dialectic of the judgment, however, no specific determination is exhausted by an individual 'this', as it can always determine other individuals. As such, the P-I relation is no less negative than it is positive. It essentially posits I as one of the many possible relations with P. In other words, the P-I relation is best rendered as 'some P are I'. Of course, this modification of P must be carried over into its relation to U through I. Thus, the second figure of the syllogism formally expresses the fact that 'because some P are I, which is U, some P are U'. Drawing upon previously deduced syncategorematic terms, then, this syllogism formally relates P and U through the contingent particularity of the I. The terms placed in P and U are not related for any other reason than the fact some I has been posited as connecting them. As in the previous syllogism, nothing in the form tells us what limits there are to such predication; it is just that this form itself *posits* the contingency of the relation between the three that the first merely *implied*.

Thus, the alteration of the position of P and I formally expresses the fact that the extremes of this judgment 'are connected [only] by means of a contingent individuality' (W 6, p. 366/SL, p. 675). This mediated predication, then, is now explicitly posited as lacking formal justification, for whatever relation holds between the terms is contingently posited by mind, and is not justified by the syllogistic form, for there is no determinate relation between any of the parts. As such, the extremes



remain 'mutually indifferent determinatenesses' (W6, p. 368/SL, p. 677) that are, in fact, united solely through the universal relating activity of mind, which brings the terms contingently together. Thus, the true mediating link between terms, here, is not any of the individual terms, but the universal activity of mind that holds them all in relation. As such a new figure of the syllogism is required; one which formally expresses the mediating role of universality, or the predicating activity of mind in bringing the terms together: that is I-U-P.

The third figure of the syllogism, in other words, posits the fact that the syllogism of existence is a merely formal relation, imposed on its terms from the outside without determinate justification. Thus, like the judgment of existence, the syllogism of existence relates terms that 'have an immediate content that is indifferent to the form, or, what is the same thing, they are determinations of form which have not yet reflected themselves into determinations of content' (W 6, p. 369/SL, p. 678). As with that judgment, any and all relations can be posited through it, because it is applied externally to extremes without reflecting in any way their meaningful determination. Their relationship is merely formal, abstract and contingent, and therefore the universal that is connected to both extremes must no less be denied by both extremes: that is, I is not U and U is not P. As such, it does not matter how the terms are related to each other (e.g. I-U-P, or P-U-I), for the form completely abstracts from the concrete determination of the terms.

Thus, what is made explicit in the third figure of the syllogism is the 'sheer futility' of the merely formal, or 'relationless syllogism' (W 6, p. 371/SL, p. 679), whose utter indifference to content, order, etc. makes it no more rational than the mere form of the judgment. Thus, I-U-P fails to adequately express the utter indifference for the specificity of content that this syllogism displays, for it still formally distinguishes (however vaguely) between the terms. What is required, then, is a new figure that posits the fact that the syllogism of existence totally 'abstracts from the qualitative determination of the terms and consequently [posits] their merely external unity' (W 6, p. 371/SL, p. 679). In other words, we must remove the individual and specific determinations of the terms from the form and alter it to express merely the universal relating power of mind. This is captured through the *mathematical syllogism*, or U-U-U, which posits the fact that all of the terms are held together in a unity only because they can be so formally related by mind.

This form of the syllogism may seem more remote from our linguistic investigation than the others, especially because Hegel's (mostly derisive) analysis of it concerns its status as an axiom of mathematics. Its mathe-

mathematical formulation is 'if two things or determinations are equal to a third, they are equal to each other' (W6, p. 371/SL, p. 679). However, there is an equality expressed in the grammatical relation between the terms, in that each is only treated as a distinct word that is relatable through the formal power of mind, and it is in this sense that all syllogistic terms are equal to each other. The 'self-evidence of this [tautological syllogism], therefore, rests merely on the fact that its [determination of] content is so meager and abstract' (W6, p. 372/SL, p. 680).

As with the judgment of existence, however, this relation is not itself solely abstract and negative, but implicitly contains a positive progression. The totally abstract syllogism posits the fact that the three terms are brought together by mind in a manner which does not consider the determinations of the terms posited within the syllogism. In other words, all the figures of the syllogism of existence posit a rational justification (i.e. I, P or U) for relating terms, but none of them precludes unjustified and irrational relations from being posited. Thus, the negative outcome of the syllogism of existence is that the mere form of the syllogism is an empty abstraction without determinate application to content. The positive outcome, however, is the realization that the form cannot simply abstract all qualitative determination from its terms, but must reflect the qualitative determinations of its content. It is for this reason that a new rational figure must be developed, which Hegel (for obvious reasons) calls *the syllogism of reflection*.

### The Syllogism of Reflection

Like the judgment that bears its name, then, the syllogism of reflection must place formal restrictions on its potential content. This new syllogism, in other words, must make explicit through its form that each term posited within it is 'in truth posited not as an individual, separate one, but as a relation to the other' (W6, p. 380/SL, p. 686) which reflects its qualitative determinations. As such, its middle term must be altered to justify U as a reflective determination of I. As we saw in the progress of judgment of reflection, this reflection presupposes that *all* uses of the term are predicable identically. Because the P provides the reflective connection between the I and the U, it must be the case that the I, because it is P, is always U. That is, every I predicated with P is also necessarily predicated with U, for example (in an updating of Hegel's example), 'Gaius is a human, and because all humans are mortal, Gaius is mortal'. Hegel calls this first form the *syllogism of allness*.

Let us take a closer look at the nature of this relation. The syllogism of existence collapsed because it externally connected individual terms, thus allowing for contradictory predications of the same subject. Thus, for example, 'from the middle term green it [could] be inferred that a picture was pleasing because green is pleasing to the eye' but the abstract form also allows the picture 'all the same to be [determined as] ugly on account of other [possible particulars] from which this latter predicate could be inferred' (W 6, p. 382/SL, p. 688). In the syllogism of allness, however, the middle term 'is not the abstraction of something merely [posited as] green' but something whose determination as green implies that it must reflect 'greenness' in 'all [of the] *properties* that [it] possess[es] besides greenness' (W 6, p. 382/SL, p. 688). That which is predicated with the middle term 'green' must be, precisely because of this predication, invariably also predicable with the determinations that invariably reflect 'green' (e.g. 'pleasing to the eye'), and therefore must reflect the latter determinations in all of its predications. In other words, by giving the middle term the determination of allness, the syllogism formally expresses the fact that the extremes posited within it are meant to be reflective of each other, and as such their relation excludes contradictory predications and justifications (i.e. any individual I predicated with P, in all of its predications, must be always U, precisely because it is P). Thus, the contradictions produced by merely external predication are removed by positing the middle term as invariably connected to U, thus expressing a reflective determination of I. As Hegel's example makes clear, this is not about moving to a new kind of content (as he claims 'green' can be both an abstract middle term and one of allness, and for the same U), but a new kind of form: that is, I is U because it is P, and everything P is U.

There is, however, a tension present within this syllogism. The form is meant to express an invariably reflective U of I, which is justified through the predication of I with P. However, if P is always U, then P can only be justifiably predicated of I if it is already known that I is U. In other words, P does not provide a justification for connecting I to U, because predicating P of I already presupposes that I is U (e.g. 'Gaius is human' is only justified of 'Gaius' if the predicate 'mortal', which is invariably connected to 'human', is already known to be reflective of 'Gaius' as well). In fact, since the P is always attached to some I as its predicate, the connection between U and P is only invariable in so far as every I of which P is predicated is invariably U. The connection between the P and U, which is meant to be invariable, consequently depends entirely upon the specific individuals that fill the I 'slot'. It is only because every I is U that every P is U, and thus P and U are connected through the mediation of I. What



is required, then, is another form of the syllogism, which reflects the fact that I mediates between the allness of the P and its invariable U. Hegel calls this form the *sylllogism of induction*.

In the syllogism of induction, then, I connects P and U. Unlike the second figure of the syllogism of existence, however, it is not immediate individuality that makes the connection, but *every* individual I that is posited as determining the invariable connection between P and U. In other words, 'here the middle term is *all the individuals*' (W6, p. 385/SL, p. 690) that can be predicated of P because they are U. Thus, its form is U-I-P.<sup>13</sup> While the form matches the second figure of the syllogism of existence, here the middle term is filled by an indeterminate number of terms that constitute the set of individuals that are P and U (i.e. U-I, I, I, I, etc.-P). Thus, what this form posits is that the U (or P, for the order of the extremes is a matter of indifference), because it is predicable of the totality of reflective individuals, is invariably P (or U).

The syllogism of induction, however, is formally inadequate to its own task. The connection between the U and P is invariable because the middle term is all of the individuals that can be predicated with the U. However, nothing in the form tells us either how many of these there are, or what terms are reflective of any U or P. As such, no terms predicated can be formally determined to be genuinely reflective, and even if they happen to be so, there is no way of telling how many more reflective predicates there are (if any). There is simply no way, through this form, of determining the complete list of individuals that connect P and U, and thus the I 'remains *a problem*' (W6, p. 385/SL, p. 691), for it is a mere collection of individuals that happened to be posited in that place by mind, not the definitively complete list required to secure the invariable connection. As such, the posited 'unity [of the syllogism] remains only a perennial *ought-to-be*' for any individuals actually posited in the I place reflect merely 'the subjective taking together of them ... by means of ... *external reflection*' (W6, p. 385/SL, p. 691).

This syllogism, then, rests on the contingency of mind positing some collection of individuals being as connecting P and U, and as such is only justified on the presupposition that mind will only collect individuals with similar qualitative determinations. In short, this syllogism presupposes that any I that is posited as connecting P and U will be, in terms of the relevant determinations, *like* every other I that has been posited as connecting them. What is really presupposed, here, is that each middle term connecting the extremes posited by mind is *analogous* to the terms that have been, are or will be posited as connecting the extremes. The connections made by mind between the extremes of a syllogism are

grounded in their analogy to the determinations it has already posited of another set of terms. It is mind's ability to relate terms on analogy to previously posited relations, then, that actually justifies newly posited connections. Thus, a new form of syllogism is necessary which makes this presupposition explicit, which Hegel calls the *syllogism of analogy*.

Hegel argues that 'the syllogism of analogy is a peculiar form' (W 6, p. 388/SL, p. 693) of relation, and is consequently all too often 'expressed in the shape of a content' (W 6, pp. 387–88/SL, p. 692). However, we can say that, since this syllogism posits the connection between the specific extremes as grounded in the relating power of mind, it once again takes the form I–U–P. Unlike the third syllogism of reflection, through, this relation is not external, but grounded in an analogy to a previous determination. Thus, this U contains, as it were, an individual, or set of individuals, which functions as the analogical connection between two extremes. Mind makes the connection, but on analogy to an already determined (set of) middle term(s). For example, if 'tree' and 'bush' have already been determined as 'plant', and 'plant' as predicated with 'green', then any other term predicated with 'plant' (e.g. 'mushroom'), on analogy with 'tree' and 'bush' is reasoned to be likewise predicable by 'green' (e.g. 'a mushroom, as a plant, is green').<sup>11</sup> It is the role of the individual in mind's relating activity that leads the form to be so easily confused with content. It is key to note, however, (as Hegel does at excessive length throughout this section) that it is *not* the specific content, but the new *form* of relation that makes the connection.

The problem with this form, again, is that the individual(s) from which the analogy is drawn remain(s) contingent. The form leaves it unclear whether or not the middle term actually expresses a reflective determination of either extreme, or is just contingently posited as such by mind. It is unclear, in other words, whether or not the analogy actually reflects the determination of the related terms, or whether it is merely contingently asserted of them (as it would be in our case of 'mushrooms'). As such, this syllogism still forges its connection through a contingently posited 'this', and can provide no necessary justification for its relation.

All three syllogisms of reflection, then, only relate the extremes through some specific individuality (be it as individuals or sets). As such, all reflection can infer is that the relation between the particular and the universal *ought to be* determinately reflective. In all three cases, however, the relation ultimately reveals itself to impose a merely external relation upon individuals that may or may not reflect the form. As usual, however, this is not a total failure. This syllogism, no less than the judgment that shares its name, reveals that reflection presupposes a necessary relation as

holding between the terms. In other words, this syllogism presupposes a justifying mediator that can specify which determinations are necessarily possessed by posited individuals. For this, we require a new form, that of *the syllogism of necessity*.

### The Syllogism of Necessity

Because the syllogism of necessity arises to posit the necessary connection of the extremes of the judgment, its 'middle term is not [to be] some alien immediate content, but the reflection-into-self of the determinateness of the extremes' (W6, p. 391/SL, p. 695). Thus, it expresses the fact that the subject is not to be 'contingently united through the syllogism with any [predicate] through any middle term' (W6, p. 393/SL, p. 697); rather, the subject should be connected, through some particular aspect of its meaningful constitution, to a predicate that expresses one of its necessary determinations. As such, the syllogism again takes the form I-P-U, but its paired judgments I-P and P-U take the form of categorical judgments, expressing the necessity of the connection. This is why this first figure is called the *categorical syllogism*. The extremes of the syllogism, then, are I and U, but they are posited as a necessary unity through their mutual necessary determination as P. It is because P is necessarily a particular aspect of the constitution of I that U is necessarily predicable of it. In short, the unity of the three terms expresses the meaningful constitution of the subject, or I which is differentiated into (some of) its determinations (i.e. P and U express necessary determinations of I). As such, this syllogism essentially posits only 'one essential nature pervading the three terms' (W6, p. 393/SL, p. 697).

As with the categorical judgment, however, nothing in the form indicates this unity, for it superficially resembles the first figures of existence and reflection. As such, the form does not express a substantially identified content, but continues to present three isolated terms that appear to be externally brought together by mind. The syllogism is meant to express the unfolding of the necessary determinations of I, but retains the form of three contingently related terms, and as such, the actual words posited within it may have determinations that are not adequate to the posited unity. Thus, the categorical syllogism merely asserts that the terms *should* be necessarily connected without formally expressing the limits that would *make* it so, and as such has not advanced much from the syllogisms of reflection. What is required, then, is a new syllogistic form that expresses the justification for positing that contingent, immediate



terms unfold themselves into necessary determinations. This new form Hegel calls the *hypothetical syllogism*.

This new syllogistic form, then, must express two determinate aspects of predication. First and foremost, it must formally express that the connection between the extremes is a necessary one, or that the predicate *must* express the determinations of the subject. From the hypothetical judgment, we know that this is achieved through the form, 'if S, then P'. Secondly, it must also formally posit the justification for a necessary connection. What the development of the syllogism makes clear, however, is that form alone cannot justify a predication as *necessary*. All of the forms of the syllogism posit a different formal mediating reason for predication, yet all reveal their own presupposition of a *content* adequate to the relating form, or terms whose determinations actually reflect the relations posited of them. Thus, it is only the constitution of an actual subject which ultimately justifies its identity with a predicate: that is, what justifies any specific posited predication is the correspondence of the meaningful constitution of the subject to that of the predicate. It is the individual subject that unfolds into its determinations, and thus provides the justification for all predications. What is required, then, is a form which expresses the subject as the justification for predication.

Accordingly, the hypothetical syllogism begins with the formal relation between two terms which expresses necessity, or 'if S, then P'. This judgment, here, expresses the fact that mind presupposes the necessity of its predications. Essentially, then, it means: 'if this S corresponds to the posited predication, then this P is its predicate'. In order to justify this predication, however, the subject will actually have to correspond to the predication: that is, 'the [actual] being of [S] is to be taken *not as a mere immediacy*, but essentially as *the middle term of the syllogism*' (W6, p. 395/SL, p. 699). This can be expressed as 'but S is', meaning 'S is an appropriate subject for this predicating relation'. Thus, its middle term is a real subject that corresponds to the predication. Since the S is appropriate for the posited relation, then we have justified P as one of its particular determinations: that is, 'therefore P is', meaning 'P is a justified determination of S'. In other words, this syllogism justifies a predication through the existence of a corresponding predicate.

Let us be clear about this form. Its first part formally expresses the presumption of necessity behind one of mind's posited predications; its middle term, the fact that there is a corresponding individual subject for the posited predication; and its conclusion, the predicate as a particular determination of the subject justified by the latter's corresponding constitution. As such, its form is, again, U-I-P, but the U is the universal

predicating relation, the I is an individual subject with a meaningful constitution that corresponds to the predication, and the P is a particular predicate that is justified as expressing a determination of the subject. In other words, the necessary unity presupposed by both the judgment and the syllogism has been formally posited.

However, the form does not yet adequately express the necessity presupposed by predication. While it formally expresses that the unity posited within predication must be reflected in the posited content, it still, in terms of its form, concerns only the contingent individuals that happen to fill it. It does not yet tell us that all possible predications must have corresponding subjects, and/or that all possible subjects must have corresponding predicates in order to be determinate. In order to demonstrate not just that any predication that happens to be made must express a determination of subject, but that all terms must be subjects and/or predicates with corresponding terms, we need a form which shows us 'how each term is implicitly involved in every other one'.<sup>15</sup> This is the form of the *disjunctive syllogism*.

The disjunctive syllogism uses the disjunctive judgment to express the necessity of subjects being some specific predicates, and of specific predicates belonging to some subjects that we deduced in the judgment, but combines it with the justification through individual subjects that the dialectic of the syllogism deduces. Its form, then, affirms (1) that subjects must have their determinations expressed through predication, (2) that not all predicates are predicable of individual subjects in the same form (i.e. some are external, some necessary, etc.) and (3) that it is the corresponding constitution of the subject that justifies both the application of some predicates and the exclusion of others. As such, its deduction (in Hegel's rather formal presentation) is:

A is either B or C or D,

But A is B,

Therefore A is neither C or D.

Or again: A is either B or C or D,

But A is neither C nor D,

Therefore A is B. (W6, p. 399/SL, p. 701–702)

Here, (expanding Hegel's truncated phrasing) the set of individual options for predication is given, and their individual determinations make them both possible predicates of some subjects, and mutually exclusive of each other. As such, the first move represents the individual side. Second, an actual predication is either posited or denied, both of

which are universal forms of judging, and thus the middle term is the universal power of relation. The conclusion is either that some specific predicates are excluded through the justification of others, or some specific predicates are justified through the exclusion of others, and thus represents the particular side.

This I-U-P structure, however, is effectively irrelevant, because with this last move we have just demonstrated that 'the *formalism of the syllogistic process* ... has sublated itself' (W 6, p. 400/SL, p. 702). The disjunctive syllogism formally posits the fact that every determinate term within mind is either a subject whose determinations are expressed in predicates, or a predicate that expresses the determination of subjects, but that it is the specific constitutions of the terms that justify the specific predicating relations into which they enter. In other words, in this final syllogism 'the distinction [between] mediating [form] and mediated [terms] has disappeared' in that the terms of the judgment are themselves posited as justifying their relation, and thus 'the difference of the middle term from its extremes has thereby sublated itself' (W 6, pp. 400-1/SL, p. 703). Every term memorized by mind has its own determinations which make it either subject or predicate in relation to others. In this final syllogism, then, what is formally posited is the fundamental presupposition of predication in general, that is, 'everything is a syllogism', i.e., every term, in accordance with its own constitution, necessarily unfolds into predicating relations.

Let us take a look back at grammatical significance of the 'Concept': we began by stripping all linguistic contingency away in the positing of a mere mind as such holding individual names as such. We saw that the very discreteness of these names presupposed distinguishing relations with others that take the form of predicating judgments. This predicating form, then, is the fundamental unit of universal grammar, implying that all linguistic expressions take the form of judgments. These judgments posited identities between terms: identities whose own internal tensions led to the further specification and alteration of the forms of judgment. These new forms expressed a variety of possible relationships between terms, from externally attached predicates (existence), to predicates that contingently determine only some uses of words and not others (reflection), to the invariable predicates of all uses of terms (necessity), as well as the forms of their negation. We saw that these relations presupposed the development of a specific set of syncategorematic terms or other surface grammatical expressions that would express these universal relations within contingent languages. These relations, we additionally saw, can be conveyed in moods expressing their supposed reality, possibility or necessity.



Such predications, however, can only be justified if there is a reason to posit them, and thus we developed syllogistic forms which posited a variety of reasons for predication that matched those of the judgments. These justifications determine universal relations of rational dependence like 'because' and 'therefore' (however they are expressed). Judgments, we determined, can be made from merely external, 'irrational' justifications (existence), from out of contingent application to only some instances of individuals (reflection) or in terms of invariable essences (necessity).

The outcome of the syllogism, however, has shown us that the very form of grammatical relation presupposes that linguistic content is always already related through it. The disjunctive syllogism demonstrates that all possible terms are always already interrelated with their others in accordance with the universal forms of judging, and it is the meaningful constitution that a term has within a community that determines which actual relations it holds with its others. Thus, all the words of a lexicon always already forge judgments with all others, in all of the forms of judgment and relation; some of these are merely formal and external, others are justified only in limited uses of a term and still others always correspond to a term. However, the very idea of a language (i.e. the very concept of linguistic mind) presupposes both a universal grammatical form that consists of a determinate set of judgments and rational predications, and a meaningfully constituted lexicon which is always already related in accordance with those forms.

In other words, the 'Concept' has taught us that (1) the forms of the judgment and the syllogism are deducible from the very idea of language as such, rather than being contingent abstractions out of natural language or subjective experience, and thus are the necessary and universal grammatical forms of all possible languages, but (2) these grammatical forms demonstrate the necessity of a contingent lexical content meaningfully interrelated through them. Any lexicon as such, then, can be shown to presuppose a universal grammar, but this grammar reciprocally presupposes a lexicon that is meaningfully determinate to subjects and communities in accordance with its form. In other words, the lexical content of language presupposes its own determinate interrelation through a universal grammatical form, and the universal grammatical form presupposes a lexical content determinately related into senses through it. Thus, the form and content of language, when developed according to their own natures, reveal themselves to reciprocally presuppose each other. Our final task, then, is to explicitly grasp how the form and content of language function as a unity.

## Chapter 4

# The Linguistic Expression of Thought

In the last two chapters, we demonstrated that the contingent content and universal form of language reciprocally presuppose each other. As such, any possible lexicon is always already interrelated with itself in accordance with the universal forms of grammar. The task of this concluding chapter, then, is to elucidate the import of this interrelation for our understanding of the nature of linguistic expression. To that end, I will first offer a very brief summary of the preceding accounts in order to sharpen our focus on the essential presuppositions of linguistics. Second, through a reading of Hegel's 'speculative sentence', I will clarify the relationship between both individual terms and their predicating structure and the formal 'I' and its contingent expressions. Third, through comparisons to the work of Gadamer and Derrida, I will elucidate Hegel's account of 'objective' expression. Finally, I will conclude with some remarks on the linguistic expression of speculative philosophy.

### Hegel's Philosophy of Language in Outline

Intuitive consciousness is not passive, but freely and actively intends object(s) under predicated aspect(s). Our subjective certainty regarding these intentions presupposes the universality of the determining forms of the intending 'I'. These forms, however, are only grasped through the determination of specific contents that are peculiar to the contingent history of a subject. Consequently we are confronted with the problem of subjective idealism. In order to demonstrate the universality of the forms of content-determination, we must test our intentions against those of others, and language serves as the ideal medium through which we can communicate our ideas. Inter-subjective communication presupposes the existence of generally articulated marks of the other through which ideas and intentions can be objectively expressed. Language acquisition consists of our internalizing these generally articulated marks: that is, the lexicon of a community, as synthesized with subjective meanings, in order

to give our intentions 'objective' expression. Thus, acquired languages consist of memorized lexicons of external, generally articulated marks synthesized with internal, subjective meanings that communicate our intentions to others for the purpose of determining their objectivity.

All languages, however, are community-specific, as evinced by episodes of cross-cultural dialogue and misunderstanding, and all expressions and receptions are likewise subject-specific. As such, all linguistic expressions are subject to the charge of contingency. To evade this charge, and continue mind's drive toward objectivity, one must strip their acquired lexicon of all subjective and communal contingency, that is, as lacking all personal or inter-subjective senses, and posit it as a set of mechanically memorized names as such.

By positing their acquired signs as a collection of mere names as such within a merely formal 'I', anyone can deduce the basic grammatical form (S is P) according to which the words of any lexical language are interrelated. The mere difference of words from each other dialectically progresses into a finite set of forms of predication (i.e. the judgments and syllogisms), each of which posits a specific syntactical relation (as externally different, merely reflective, or invariably necessary) as holding between a determined subject and a determining predicate. As this form progressively develops, it reveals its own presupposition of a content that meaningfully expresses its determinate relations. Thus, the form, which was deduced from the lexicon as the latter's universal ground, reveals that, in turn, it presupposes a contingent lexicon as always related through it.

Thus, the ability of meaningful language to communicate subjective intentions presupposes the universal grammar that is common to all minds, and reciprocally the necessary form deducible in abstraction from meaningful expression presupposes a lexical content determined through it. The lexicon is meaningful only in so far as it is immanently grammatical, and the grammar is universal only in so far as it is immanent to any meaningful lexicon.<sup>1</sup> Linguistic form and content, in other words, reciprocally presuppose and ground each other. We can, thus, define language as the identity-in-difference of universal, grammatical form and particular, lexical content.

Thus, returning to the Introduction's discussion of Hegelian scholarship, we can say that Hegel, in line with the left-wing interpreters, holds that thought can only be expressed in some contingent, communal language. Siding with the right-wing commentators, Hegel also holds that there must be a logical form of thoughtful determination that is universal and necessary, or else all communication is groundless and contingent.



Unlike the right, however, he refuses to abandon natural language for an artificial 'servant' terminology that perfectly expresses thought,<sup>2</sup> while equally rejecting (against the left) the groundless particularity of language that denies the possibility of linguistic universals. Readers on the left, in Hegelian terms, are too immersed within the vivacity of immediate, contingent content, while those on the right artificially bar formal thought from the content whose essence it purports to be. Consequently, Hegel condemns both extremes as reflecting the prejudices of 'ordinary' consciousness:

In ordinary life, consciousness has for its content items of information, experiences, concrete objects of sense, thoughts [that are] ready to hand ... Sometimes consciousness [simply] follows where this [content] leads [i.e. left-wing Hegelianism, while] sometimes it breaks the chain, and deals arbitrarily with its content, behaving as if it were determining and manipulating it from outside [i.e. right-wing Hegelianism]. (*W* 3, p. 48/*PS*, §48)

Hegel's theory of language, to the contrary, neither requires a contrived language that 'serves' abstract thought, nor does it deny the possibility of objective expression. It explicitly determines the universal structuring form that remains merely implicit in everyday language use, and reciprocally reveals the meaningful interrelation of the lexicon as presupposed by grammatical form. A genuine philosophy of language can result neither from being carried along by our habitual immediacy within language's meaningful content (unpacking the senses of terms, comparative linguistics, etc.), nor by simply negating that immediacy and arbitrarily redefining it according to abstract, formal demands (universal characteristics, 'meta-languages', etc.). Hegel's philosophical analysis of language demonstrates that the universal form 'is totally absorbed in the content, for it is the immanent self of the content; yet has at the same time returned into itself, for it is pure self-identity in otherness' (*W* 3, p. 53/*PS*, §54). While each side of this identity can and indeed must be determined in abstraction from the other, it is only by grasping their return to unity that we actually understand the nature of language. This unity is articulated in Hegel's analysis of the 'speculative sentence'.

## The Speculative Sentence

Because it occurs at the outset of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel's account of the determinate identity-in-difference that is linguistic expression, or the 'speculative sentence', presents the fresh reader with a handful of interpretive problems; problems that disappear, however, when these pages are examined in light of the theory of language detailed above. Firstly, it is introduced as an account of the expression of a thinking – that is speculative, or 'conceiving [*begreifende*] thinking' (W 3, p. 56/PS, §59, trans. mod.) – whose nature can only be grasped once the concept's unity of form and content has been accomplished. Thus, it is appropriate that our account closes with it, for we have already fully developed this unity, and thus can read his account from the point of view of its achievement. The benefit of returning to it after the preceding exposition is even more evident when we read Hegel's claim that individual words '[do] not express what is contained in them' (W 3, pp. 24–5/PS, §20), for each 'by itself is a senseless [*sinnloser*] sound, a bare [*blosser*] name' (W 3, p. 26/PS, §23, trans. mod.) until it receives determination through others. These claims are far from self-evident and must strike fresh readers as decidedly odd. As we have seen, however, words must be *made* senseless through an intentional positing in order to wrest them from our contingent linguistic habits. It appears, then, that the theory of language developed above is presumed by the earlier *Phenomenology*'s analysis.

Interpretation of these pages is also made problematic by the examples Hegel employs: 'God is being' and 'the actual is the universal' (W 3, pp. 59–60/PS, §62). In both cases, the subject and the predicate signify so-called 'universal' concepts, and thus seem to imply that the speculative identity of his examples belongs solely to the particular contents, rather than applying to language itself.<sup>3</sup> We have seen, however, that the universal form is immanent to all possible contents and thus these examples should be read as indicating the path by which similar analyses can be offered of sentences such as 'John is a very bright student' or 'The cow is empty'.<sup>4</sup>

In order to properly grasp Hegel's 'speculative sentence', we must first recognize that his account functions on two levels. On one level it is an account of the speculative unity of linguistic terms in subject/predicate relations, but on the other it is no less an account of the individual formal 'I' and its linguistic content.<sup>5</sup> These two levels are intertwined in Hegel, reflecting the unity of grammatical mind and its lexical content that we have detailed above. In order to clarify both levels, Hegel (as always) articulates his theory of language in contrast with that of 'ordinary' consciousness.

According to Hegel, the relationship between a formal 'I' and its content is ordinarily understood on analogy to that between a subject and its predicates. On this view, within all predicating relations 'the Subject constitutes the basis to which the content is [contingently] attached' (*W3*, p. 57/*PS*, §60). The subject, in itself, is independently determinate, and thus its predicate is merely attached to it from the outside for some contingent, subjective purpose. Words are not related in themselves, but are related by the external force of the person predicating. By extension, ordinary thinking posits the formal 'I', or linguistic subject, as the solid basis that receives content from the outside, but is both passive in the process (i.e. merely accepts any content) and independent from that which it passively receives (i.e. all linguistic content is merely external to consciousness). Thus, the ordinary conceptions of both the linguistic proposition and the linguistic subject are analogous to the inaccurate conception of intuitive consciousness with which our account of Hegel's philosophy of language began.

Speculative thinking, as we have seen, 'behaves in a different way' (*W3*, p. 57/*PS*, §60). Through Hegel's dialectical analysis of language, the lexical content has determined itself to be grounded in the universal grammatical form of the abstract 'I', which has in turn revealed its own immanence within all linguistic content. Thus, any possible lexical subject is only determinate in so far as it is always already implicitly interrelated to all of its possible predications (from the external to the reflective to the necessary), and no predicate is arbitrarily attached to some subject, for all are already interrelated with it as one of its determinations (in accordance with one of the universal forms of predication). Likewise, the formal 'I' 'is not a passive Subject inertly supporting the accidents [of its content]; it is, on the contrary, the self-moving concept which takes its [lexical] determinations back into itself' (*W3*, p. 57/*PS*, §60, trans. mod.).

Thus, the speculative unity of form and content makes explicit the activity of the subject, in both senses of the term. First, the subject of a proposition does not merely receive predicates, for its very determination as an individual arises from its active interrelation with its others in accordance with the various forms of judgment. In other words, 'each S is every P', but each predication posits a different determining relation that is external to, reflective of, or necessarily connected with, its meaning. Second, the subject as formal 'I' does not stand outside of communal language, either passively being determined by linguistic content (i.e. left-wing Hegelianism) or abstractly negating language's richness and externally determining terms in 'the vanity of its own knowing' (i.e. right-wing Hegelianism) (*W3*, p. 56/*PS*, §59); rather, as the universal



structuring form, it 'enters into the differences and the content, and constitutes the determinateness, i.e. the differentiated content and its movement, instead of remaining inertly over against it' (W 3, p. 57/PS, §60).

It is for this reason that Hegel (slightly polemically) claims that in the speculative unity of both subject and predicate, as well as grammatical mind and lexical content, 'the difference between subject and predicate is destroyed [*zerstört wird*]' (W 3, p. 59/PS, §61, trans. mod.). Because the unity in question takes place on both levels, this can no more be read as affirming the death of the judgment form than it can be read as affirming the death of the individual subject. Rather, what is destroyed, here, is the ordinary understanding of both language and the linguistic subject. The subject of a sentence is not meaningful in itself, but only in so far as it always already actively anticipates all of its possible relations to the complete set of its predicates. Similarly, the individual subject is not simply a determinate, articulated self 'able to function as the determining agent in the movement of predication, arguing back and forth whether to [merely] attach this or that predicate [but is always already] absorbed in the content' (W 3, pp. 57–59/PS, §60–62). In both cases, the subject, far from being destroyed, is explicitly posited in its real nature.

This speculative unity, then, affirms both that the terms of the lexicon are always already mutually determining and determined through the necessary forms of grammar, and that the grammatical 'I' is always already immersed within, and thus both determining of and determined by, its linguistic content. The 'I' and its lexicon are reciprocally grounding, producing a speculative identity-in-difference of form and content, necessity and contingency, subject and substance. To make this relation clearer to ordinary consciousness, Hegel turns to the metaphor of music.

The apparent conflict between the propositional form that distinguishes between the subject and its predicated content and the speculative unity that seems to destroy it, according to Hegel, is analogous to the equally apparent conflict in music 'that occurs in rhythm between metre and accent' (W 3, p. 59/PS, §61). On the one hand, the 'form of the proposition is the appearance of the determinate sense [*des bestimmten Sinnes*] or the accent that differentiates its fulfillment' (W 3, p. 59/PS, §61, trans. mod.). The proposition is a relation in which some determinate (external, reflective or necessary) sense is posited of a subject through a specific predicate, thus making each term stand out in accented relief against the other. However, the content also expresses the (metrical) flow from one part into the other, unfolding the unity that reveals that 'the predicate

expresses [some relation with the subject's meaningful] Substance, and that the subject itself falls into the universal, this is the unity in which the accent dies away' (W3, p. 59/PS, §61). All subjects are already inter-related to all possible predicates in accordance with the finite set of distinct manners of predication. In other words, predication is not the mere attaching of unrelated terms, but the immanent interrelation of linguistic content in its self-unfolding. It is this identity of unfolding movement and differentiating determination that Hegel compares to the accented flow of 'rhythm' (W3, p. 59/PS, §61).

Thus, the speculative sentence reveals not only the inner workings of any given proposition, but the nature of speculative thinking itself. Contrary to the dogmatic prejudices of ordinary consciousness, a deeper grasp of language reveals that it is 'unnecessary to clothe the [lexical] content in an external formalism; the content is in its very nature the transition into such a formalism which ceases to be external, since the form is the innate development of the concrete content itself' (W3, p. 55/PS, §56). Speculative thinking both differentiates between the determinations that unfold in the movement of linguistic thinking, and follows their movements as they produce the unities that determine the content of thought. Hegel's theory of language demonstrates that speculative thinking 'consists partly in not being separated from the content, and partly in spontaneously determining the rhythm of its movement' (W3, p. 55/PS, §57).<sup>6</sup> This immanent determination of the totality of its contingent content according to the various specific relations of its universal form, and vice versa is that of which 'logical necessity in general consists' (W3, p. 55/PS, §56). The exposition of reciprocal determination in its incessant movement is called 'speculative philosophy' (W3, p. 56/PS, §56). A speculative, or Hegelian philosophy of language, then, presents the active thinking that systematically determines the identity-in-difference of language's necessary form and contingent content in the rhythm of its explicit and implicit relations. Below, we shall return to the nature of speculative philosophy and its expression.

For now, however, we can say that Hegel's philosophy of language reveals to us the speculative unity of grammatical form and lexical content that produces meaningful discourse between subjects. Communication is *possible* because there are grammatical forms universally possessed by each subject *qua* 'I', and communication is *undertaken* because the intentions and ideas that individual subjects formulate through them are always open to question. We use the universal predicating form to formulate contingent expressions based on our subjective meaning intentions and, upon receiving the contingent expressions of others,

(consciously or unconsciously) parse their expressions as expressing either an external, contingent or necessary predication of some subject. Thus, Hegel essentially affirms Humboldt's concept of language as the 'infinite use of finite means'.<sup>7</sup> Beyond Humboldt, however, Hegel's theory of language contends that each predication that a memorized lexicon makes possible is always already implicitly present within the linguistic subject. Thus, the grammatical forms are the finite means through which anything and everything is always already expressible, and the content is the infinite (implicit or explicit) interrelation of all terms through it.

Thus far, we have determined both that all predications are always already present within a memorized lexicon and that some of these merely distinguish the meaningful constitution of subjects, some reflect only of some instances of them, while still others necessarily express their meaning. However, what Hegel's theory of language does not tell us is which terms possess which relations. Every term forges some kind of identity with every other, in the form *S is P*; but the universal form, as we have seen, does not indicate which predicates are external, reflective or necessary of any subject. Moreover, because the content of acquired language consists of communal marks that are synthesized with subjective meanings, and are used to express subjectively particular intentions and ideas, there is no guarantee that the contingent predications we actually make will match those intended by any others, let alone being generally agreed upon within the wider linguistic community. In other words, while all words relate to all others, we may intend some predicates as necessary determinations of certain subjects, while others intend them merely as external, or vice versa, and nothing within either the form or content can definitively decide the matter. As such, neither the form nor the content of acquired language indicates what specific predications, or expressed intentions, are objectively valid. How, then, can we achieve the verification of our intentions that drove us to acquire language in the first place?

### Language and Inter-subjective Objectivity<sup>8</sup>

In order to properly address this problem, we must first recall that inter-subjective communication is the presupposed site through which objectivity is won. Each subject acquires communal language because it desires to see its own intentions expressed back by others. The inter-subjective field of communication, in other words, is created by the competing demands of expressive individuals for confirmation of their



own intentions. It is only through this mutual exchange of contingent expressions that we can determine which intentions are objective.

Hegel's philosophy of language, then, does not determine language's objective connection to some extra-linguistic 'truth' (fixed referents, primal etymologies, etc.); it demonstrates the universal discursive structure within which the inter-subjectively determined objectivity of particular predications can be and is sought. Knowledge of the grammatical form that universally grounds all languages is required in order to liberate minds from the (left-wing) immersion in content, while the grounding of the form in acquired lexicons lifts the (right-wing) bar that separates formal thought from its content. Hegel's analysis of language thus re-immerses us in contingent linguistic content, but with the explicit knowledge of the necessary dialogue through which progressively universal knowledge about our intentions can be won. In many ways, then, Hegelian linguistics resembles Gadamer's hermeneutics.<sup>9</sup>

Gadamer is generally critical of Hegel for over-emphasizing the universal form that structures discourse at the cost of the specificity of expression, charging him with being idealist and absolutist for positing a truth outside of expression which, precisely because it is unlimited by the finiteness of linguistic activity, is therefore infinite and true. However, as we have seen, Hegel's linguistics does not place form above content, or privilege universality over contingency. To the contrary, Hegel would agree with Gadamer that communal language is the primary 'medium [through] which substantive understanding and agreement can take place between two people'.<sup>10</sup> Individuals enter into discourse with a contingent set of subjective, intentional relations towards the world, that is, meaning intentions that are synthesized with and articulated through public words. Gadamer calls the previously formed set of subjective intentions with which each participant enters dialogue a 'horizon'.<sup>11</sup> Thus, dialogue presupposes (1) a mutually possessed sign-system for communication and (2) speakers who enter dialogue from different horizons, and thus do not necessarily agree on the objective validity of any particular expression. Both Gadamer and Hegel contend then, that dialogue is *possible* because horizons are linguistically articulated in accordance with public language, but *necessary* because all expressions articulate particular, subjective intentions.

Thus, neither the commonality of a lexicon, nor its universal form can guarantee the inter-subjective validity of any particular intentional determination. To the contrary, language can only articulate the horizons of different individuals because it is flexible enough to allow for any and all possible intentions to be expressed. As such:

every word [essentially contains] an inner dimension of multiplication: every word breaks forth as if from its own center and is related to a whole, through which alone it is a word . . . Thus every word, as the event of a moment, carries with it the unsaid, to which it is related by responding and summoning. The occasionality of human speech is not a casual imperfection of its expressive power; it is, rather, the logical expression of the living virtuality of speech that brings a totality of meaning into play, without being able to express it totally. All human speaking is finite in such a way that there is laid up within it an infinity of meaning to be explicated and laid out.<sup>12</sup>

For both thinkers, then, language consists of a lexicon of terms, each of which essentially anticipates an infinite set of intended relations with their others as constitutive of its meaning. Gadamer, however, consistently downplays the philosophical value of the '*abstraction down to form*' as that which 'has to be reserved'<sup>13</sup> in genuinely expressive dialogue, whereas Hegel, as we have seen, argues that the 'distance' element of dialogue requires us to deduce its presupposed form. In deducing the necessary form of grammar, Hegel supersedes Gadamer by explicitly demonstrating the universality of the form of intentional determination whose products are expressed through public language. We shall return to the consequences of this improvement shortly.

Language, then, is not a mere tool through which extra-linguistic thoughts of forms are articulated, but itself 'coincides with the very act of understanding'.<sup>14</sup> One might say that language speaks us, rather than vice versa, as our intentions are formulated in and through an existent language that implicitly contains all possible predications. Our own expressed intentions, then, are merely some of the predications implicitly present within our language. The same, of course, is true of those of others no matter how different they are from our own, as our acquired language implicitly articulates all possible predications. Linguistic subjectivity, then, is fundamentally interpretive, as it necessarily involves comparing our own intentional expressions through dialogue with those of others. Dialogue broadens our own horizon by bringing it into contact with a wider scope of possible predications. Because each possible predication is implicit within a language, each is in principle understandable by all who speak it. Through contact with others, we either receive confirmation of our original intentions, or confront other contrasting and contradicting predications implicitly present within language. Inter-subjective dialogue, then, directs us to grasp the interrelation of language as a whole.

However, while dialogue allows us to grasp language's general inter-relation, we have nonetheless seen that not all particular expressions are held with equal validity across communities. The subjective purpose of dialogue is not simply to grasp the nature of language itself, but to confirm the validity of particular intentional expressions concerning thought and experience. It is only complete consensus, then, amongst the parties in dialogue that grants true objective validity to any particular expression. Only inter-subjective agreement on a commonly accepted set of language's implicit predications would constitute objectivity. Thus, the wider the acceptance an expression has within the linguistic community, the more objectivity it possesses. The real *telos* of dialogue is the complete agreement amongst all possible partners in dialogue, or the fusion of all subjective horizons into a single perspective. Gadamer holds (or at least seems to hold)<sup>15</sup> that objectivity or universality is progressively won by the gradual fusion of horizons in discourse, whose eventual end comes in universal consensus with regard to what can and cannot be validly expressed. Hegel, similarly, argues that the one who stays rooted within their own horizon without subjecting it to the test of inter-subjective dialogue:

tramples underfoot the roots of humanity. For it is the nature of humanity to press on to agreement with others; human nature only really exists in an achieved community of minds. The anti-human ... consists in staying within [one's own immediate] sphere ... and being able to communicate only at that level. (W3, p. 65/PS, §69)

Thus, the communicative field is made up of individuals whose quest for objectivity drives them to press onward to increasing inter-subjective agreement toward the goal of a completely 'fused' community of minds. It is not surprising, then, that Hegel's account of language in the *Encyclopaedia* is immediately followed by the development of *practical* mind, which actively seeks out more objective and universal relations with others in a world understood as freely intended and acted upon by subjects (W10, §483–551).

Beyond Gadamer, however, Hegel's demonstration of a necessary grammatical form provides the determinate universal structure through which discourse takes place, not just between individuals within one's community, but between radically distinct cultures and historical eras. All languages necessarily share the common forms of content-determination which are contingently expressed by different individuals, eras and cultures. If every possible subject uses the same form of



content-determination, then every possible subjective expression is in principle understandable by all. Moreover, grasping the structure of determinate thought grants us easier access to the lexical content of any culture, for each will have options for expressing the universal grammatical categories and relations. Thus, grasping grammar helps us begin to find ourselves at home in any and all lexicons, and allows us universal access to dialogue with other individuals, cultures and eras. An understanding of the nature of language allows us to see the rationality present within all expressions, individuals and cultures, for every expression is a determination of the concept. Understanding this rationality both facilitates, and drives us toward, further dialogue across community boundaries, aiding and forcing us to acquire more lexicons, increase the inter-subjective community with which we engage, etc., all with an eye towards determining which particular intentions are truly objective. Grasping the nature of language as a whole both allows and compels mind to press on to progressively inter-subjective objectivity across all historical and cultural borders, and thus opens up the possibility of truly universal agreement across humanity.

However, as we have seen, discourse arises because all individual subjects presuppose the universality of their *own* horizon. We are driven, in other words, to determine the inter-subjective validity of our own subjective intentions, and enter into discourse *presupposing* that all others will express intentions identical to ours. Moreover, all intentions, because they are articulated in communal language, carry the appearance of inter-subjective objectivity.<sup>16</sup> As we have seen, the basic form of predication (S is P) can be intended as expressing a merely external, reflective or necessary connection, and thus allows us to interpret the explicitly stated intentions of others in line with our own (e.g. reading a predication most would recognize as expressing necessity as merely external or vice versa), even when they intend otherwise. Thus, both our own intended predications and our interpretations of the expressions of others, *regardless of their content*, can appear to us as properly formed and rational, despite their possible or actual differences from the expressions of others. All expressions and interpretations, no matter how idiosyncratic, can be made to seem objective just because they are articulated linguistically.

As such, nothing within language *guarantees* that we will actually abandon our peculiar prejudices in favour of a more universal perspective. Our intentions and interpretations are always articulated in public language, and thus are never simply subjective, but their terms implicitly contain multiple possible predications and interpretations, each of which can be contingently expressed or misinterpreted, and thus are never fully

objective either. Each statement we make or receive can be 'legitimately' interpreted in a variety of ways and not all of them coincide with the desired intention of the one speaking, or with the general consensus of the community.

Thus, on the one hand, we are driven to fuse our horizons with those of others in universal communication; but, on the other hand, we expect to hear our own expressions back from others and language allows each public expression to be interpreted individually. If we fail to grasp the true nature of the discursive structure through which objectivity can be determined, then we are likely to (intentionally or not) misinterpret, ignore or otherwise distort the statements of others in order to affirm our own horizons, subverting the presupposed *telos* of communication. The consequences of this bring Hegel's philosophy of language into close proximity to that of Jacques Derrida.

Like Gadamer and Hegel, Derrida contends that all linguistic expressions contain an implicit affirmation that a subject is attempting to communicate subjective intentions to others.<sup>17</sup> As we have seen, all communication presupposes distance, or a difference, between self and other, and thus communication is only possible if there is a public language that is identical neither just to the subjective intentions of the speaker, nor to the subjective interpretation of the recipient. However, Derrida rightly notes that this implies that public language must remain expressive 'in the absolute absence of every empirically determined addressee or of the empirically determinable set of addressees'.<sup>18</sup>

As such, language 'carries with it a force of breaking with its context, that is, the set of presences which organize the moment of its [expression]'.<sup>19</sup> In order to be communicative, all expressions must function beyond the determining control of any one speaker, and thus in the absence of any knowledge of the intentions behind them. Because language essentially allows for multiple interpretations of any predication, there is no guarantee that one's expressed intentions will even be correctly *interpreted* by the other, let alone confirmed. Moreover, since dialogue arises because all speakers presuppose the objectivity of their own intentions, if we fail to grasp the rationality of the concept present in all dialogue, the structural *possibility* of misinterpretation or miscommunication in intersubjective dialogue becomes a structural *inevitability*.

Thus, any intention that anyone expresses will (1) remain understandable to others (*qua* expressed in language) and (2) remain understandable as the expression of their intentions (*qua* intentional expression) even if it is not interpreted as they actually intended it. This is because:

[All intentional expressions] continue to 'act' [i.e. express meaningful intentions] even if the author ... no longer answers for what he has written [or said, etc.,] or if in general he does not support, with his absolutely current and present intention ... the plenitude of his [expressed] meaning, of that very thing which seems to be written 'in his name'.<sup>20</sup>

As such, the structural conditions of inter-subjective dialogue equally subvert the presupposed *telos* of discourse, and in a way that is not readily perceived if one has not grasped the essential nature of language. We are driven to achieve inter-subjective objectivity for our intentions, and yet that same drive, enacted without reflection on the nature of language, subverts the achievement of its goal. In other words, dialogue is both the constant promise, and incessant deferral, of the achieved community of humanity.

While Derrida generally chastises Hegel for insufficiently attending to the consequences of the essential contingency of interpretation, it is just this ambivalence within communication that Hegel draws to our attention in discussing the public reception that he expects for the expression of his philosophy. It is true that Hegel holds that his exposition demonstrates its own truth, but this is in large part because he contends that a philosophic text 'never appears prematurely' (W 3, p. 66/PS, §71). As we have seen, Hegel argues that his work could not have occurred were it not for recent achievements in philosophical discourse, and even though he seeks to elucidate their, as yet unacknowledged, consequences, he expresses them to an audience who is already fluent in that language. Thus, Hegel holds that his text expresses (what should be) the intentions of his audience, given the revelations of both world-historical and contemporary dialogue on the subjects. Nevertheless, he recognizes that there is no guarantee, or even likelihood that it will receive a receptive ear, because his audience consists of others who both are able to interpret his text differently, and seek only to find their own prejudices within it. In regard to 'the public' and 'their spokesmen' – both of whom will assuredly either misinterpret or fail to actually finish his text – Hegel argues that:

In many respects the attitude of the public is quite different from, even contrary to that of these spokesmen. Whereas the public is inclined good-naturedly to blame itself when a philosophic work makes no appeal to it, these others, certain of their own competence, put all the blame on the author. (W 3, pp. 66–67/PS, §71)



Thus, Hegel holds that not even the expression of his own philosophy is either intrinsically objective or free from the misinterpretation or lack of understanding of others. Language essentially allows others to break off from, wilfully distort or otherwise subvert rational dialogue.

Thus, inter-subjective dialogue both presupposes and strives toward objective agreement in a universal community of minds, and at the same time subverts that goal through the competition amongst individual prejudices that exploits the multiplicity of rationally formed senses each word implicitly contains. As such, Hegel's philosophy of language both affirms the hermeneutical ideal of Gadamer as the presupposition and *telos* of dialogue, and acknowledges the inevitable deferral of this goal articulated by Derrida. However, he grounds them both in the speculative unity of the form and content of the concept. The grasping of this rational unity, then, would increase the chances of reaching Gadamer's goal by eliminating the one-sided prejudices that ground Derrida's subversion of it. Thus, Hegel's theory neither necessitates, nor abandons the overall goal of inter-subjective objectivity. Rather, Hegel's philosophy of language objectively determines the necessary and universal linguistic structures and components that ground the inter-subjective dialogue within which individual intentions can be either tested for approval or imposed upon others, wider perspectives can be won or lost, low- and high-intensity debates can be waged or abandoned, biases can be reinforced or eradicated, moralizing sermons can be preached and self-serving lies can be told.<sup>21</sup> Language expresses truth as well as falsity, and facilitates agreement as much as it does discord. Hegel's philosophy of language provides a philosophical reconstruction of the necessity of language as it actually is, not (contrary to widespread belief) as it must be in some idealized form. Hegel thus gives us both the rational tools to reach our necessary goal, as well as the structural explanation for our own continual refusal to do so.

However, if Hegel's philosophy of language cannot guarantee the objectivity of expression, we are still left with the problem that split the Hegelian left and right: what is the relationship between Hegel's speculative philosophy and its linguistic expression? More to the point, we must detail (1) the consequences of Hegel's philosophy of language for our understanding of speculative philosophy and (2) the consequences of Hegel's theory on the expression of philosophical thought. Let us conclude, then, with some remarks on speculative philosophy and its expression.

## Language and Speculative Philosophy

We have seen that the universal forms of thought are immanent to the content that they determine. As such, speculative philosophy cannot be artificially limited to a lifeless set of abstract forms. At the same time, the particular contents that fill formal thought lack universality and necessity, and as such are not the proper content of philosophy. Speculative philosophy represents neither an empty formalism, nor a contingent subjective or cultural horizon, but has for its content the activity of speculative thinking as it grasps the reciprocal determination of form and content in their incessant movement. The grasping of this structure as the unity of language is the revelation that all expressions, no matter how contingent or contrary to one's own subjective demands, have their own rationality, for they express determinations of the concept. Speculative thinking can find itself 'at home' within all discourse, for it recognizes the reciprocal determination of universal form and contingent content in all possible expressions and interpretations. It is the thinking which grasps both the details and overarching structure of the expressive identity-in-difference that constitutes inter-subjective dialogue.

Therefore, speculative philosophy is the setting forth of the unity of form and content into which the twin dogmatisms of abstraction from content and determination by it fall as their presupposed ground. The speculative philosopher of language discerns of the movement within which she is always already immersed, and thus consciously enacts the unfolding of difference and unity, rather than reinforcing her own prejudices and halting the progress of dialogue. From the side of grammar, this is the revelation of the living power of the universal form in all expression by grasping the multiplicity of interpretations any predication contains; from the side of lexicon, this is the rising to universality out of the immediacy of contingent particularity.

Speculative philosophy, then, is the exposition of the dialectical identity-in-difference of the form and content that is thinking itself, for this dialectical movement 'alone is the speculative *in act*, and only the expression of this movement is a speculative exposition' (W3, p. 61/PS, §65). Speculative thinking is the recognition of the rationality of all expressible intentions and horizons within and through the concept, and it is this recognition that allows for the expansion of one's own horizon through a greater grasp of conceptual thinking as a whole. Speculative philosophy exposes both the multitude of perspectives in their partiality, as well as the explicit rationality of their totality. Speculative philosophy, then, must express the partiality of *all* horizons

within the rationality of the whole, or the necessary interrelation of all competing intentions within the concept out of which agreement can be reached. Thus, the content of speculative philosophy will contain both the deduction of linguistic form and content from each other as the setting forth of their speculative unity, as well as thought's overarching goal of completing 'the constructive unfolding into universality and [the reciprocal] determinateness of form in which its perfection consists' (W 3, p. 51/PS, §52).

While the goal is the completed exposition of the unity of form and content, because contents are continually arising in dialogue (individuals argue, communal uses change, words are coined, cultures make contact, texts are rediscovered, etc.), the process of speculative thinking is incessant. Nevertheless, because its universal structure is the concept, one can always recognize the rationality within it. Thus, speculative thinking is constantly forced back to work, and thus is the way of despair, but it is the only way open to us and the road we traverse whether we are explicitly aware of it or not.

The question remains: since linguistic expression is always changing and open to contingent interpretation, how can speculative philosophy receive expression? Recall that the left/right split concerned the expression of philosophy, with the former group asserting that the contingency of linguistic content made its adequate expression practically impossible, and the latter contending the necessity of a contrived content that could be submitted to the demands of pure thought. It should by now be clear that this division is artificial, and that each side dogmatically denies the speculative unity of language that is rigorously and consistently articulated by Hegel. This does not, however, solve the problem of how this unity is to receive expression. On the one hand, it appears that it always receives expression, as all expressions are speculative unities of form and content; on the other hand, it appears it never receives expression, for each proposition always can and does mean otherwise than its intended meaning, and thus none guarantees the adequate expression of any specific content, even that of philosophy.

Hegel was not unaware of these problems, and in fact recognized them as arising from the nature of language. Put simply, the problem is that language always consists of (implicit or explicit) propositions, and thus philosophy must express itself in them. However, even a specifically 'philosophical proposition, since it is a proposition, leads one to believe that the usual [i.e. ordinarily understood] subject-predicate relation obtains, as well as the usual [i.e. reflective] attitude towards knowing' (W 3, p. 60/PS, §63). Thus, no single proposition can express the specu-



lative unity that is true thinking. If the propositional form cannot guarantee the adequate expression of speculative thinking, and there is no choice but to utilize it, can one actually speak of an adequate expression for speculative philosophy?

The answer, as we might expect, is both yes and no. It is true that there can be no complete or perfect set of terms or sentences that guarantee that the content of speculative philosophy will be grasped by all who read it. Thus, while Hegel's text (as we have seen) consists of necessary truths about language and thought, there is no possibility of ever perfectly expressing them such that all will understand, or agree with, them. While the acquisition of lexical content is performed by all individuals, they need not be conscious of the process; similarly, grammar is necessary and universal, but few subjects posit their acquired words as names as such. However, while the ordinary understanding of language inevitably and perpetually 'creates a difficulty' for expressing speculative philosophy, the difficulty 'can be increased or diminished through the very way in which philosophy is expounded' (W 3, p. 62/PS, §66). What the expression of speculative philosophy must try to induce in the reader is not a perfect exposition of, for example, the deduction of grammar or the interrelation of the lexicon. These are, after all, inherent to all subjects, and thus can be deduced more forcefully by subjects who attend to their own language. Rather, the true goal of philosophic *expression* should be to induce 'insight into the nature of speculation' (W 3, p. 62/PS, §66) in the reader. The essential content of speculative philosophy is the speculative thinking that is implicitly present within each subject. Thus, speculative philosophy should be expressed such that it brings its readers to attend to the speculative, dialectical nature of language. It is the speculative movement within language that must be conveyed and thus 'the exposition should [above all] preserve the dialectical form' (W 3, p. 62/PS, §66).

As such, the expression of philosophy must convey the dialectical identity-in-difference that appears as self-contradictory to ordinary consciousness. Philosophy is only adequately expressed if it compels its audience to break with ordinary understanding and recognize the speculative unity of the concept. Philosophy's goal is the breaking down of individual prejudice, and the grasping of the rationality of other horizons and predications to facilitate the progress of universal dialogue. Philosophy's exposition, then, must force its readers *to read propositions otherwise*, that is, to return to propositions from ordinary understanding and interpret them anew. It is just this method of exposition, Hegel claims:

[That] is in large measure the source of the complaints regarding the unintelligibility of philosophical writings from individuals who otherwise possess the educational requirements for understanding them. Here we see the reason behind one particular complaint so often made against them: that so much has to be read over and over before it can be understood. (W 3, p. 60/PS, §63)

Philosophy's expression must compel us to interpret ordinary propositions anew, or recognize 'that our meaning [or 'opinion', 'interpretation': *Meinung*] meant something other than what we meant to mean, and this correction of its meaning compels knowing to return to the sentence and grasp it otherwise' (W 3, 60/PS, §63, trans. mod.).<sup>22</sup> It is, perhaps, this that explains Hegel's famous penchant both for words with multiple meanings (*Ur-Teil*, *Aufhebung*, *Geschichte*, *Sinn*, *Wesen*, etc.) as well as for seemingly self-contradictory formulations ('the now is past, and therefore is', etc.).<sup>23</sup> An exposition whose key terms and basic propositions cannot be read under one interpretation, but always demand that we return and read them not only again but differently, calls our attention to the multiple meanings, predications and interpretations that each word and proposition possesses. In other words, Hegel's apparently self-contradictory, multiply-signifying exposition draws the reader's attention to the speculative nature of language itself.

Of course, this is not to say that Hegel's exposition does not express necessary philosophical truths. We have seen many of these above. However, the goal of Hegel's exposition is not simply the imparting of a particular philosophical content. The philosopher's goal, as we learned at the outset, should be to teach others how to think. The entirety of Hegel's philosophy of language consists of truths that any subject can discover for themselves, merely by attending to the language within which they think. Both the content and form of his exposition seek to compel us to break our dogmatic habits and grasp the essential rationality of both the language of expression, and the universal dialogue in which we partake. Of course, as we have seen, nothing guarantees that we shall do so. However, as we have also seen, it is only our refusal to break our habits and entertain alternate interpretations that subverts the progress of intersubjective discourse towards harmonious consensus into disagreement, trickery and prejudice. Hegel's philosophy of language, in other words, demands that we become Hegelian philosophers of language. We fail to do so at our own peril.

## Notes

### Notes to Introduction

- 1 I have modelled this introduction on that of Jay Lampert, *Synthesis and Backward Reference in Husserl's Logical Investigations* (Boston: Kluwer, 1995) which, despite its vastly different subject matter, strikes me as a model for framing speculative historical work.
- 2 My account, here, sketches Hegel's account of the development of language in the *Philosophy of Mind* (W 10, §§440–60). Chapter 2 presents a detailed reading of these pages.
- 3 Descartes' most sustained discussion of language is contained in Part V of the 1637 *Discourse on Method*, contained in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), pp. 106–18. The heading 'Cartesian linguistics' will no doubt call to mind Chomsky's history of rationalist linguistics. While the principles I will detail here certainly find expression throughout the tradition of rationalist linguistics with which Chomsky identifies, the ideas present within it are certainly not limited to thinkers in the Cartesian tradition alone. Chomsky draws a sharp distinction between pure rationalists such as Descartes and Cordemoy, and empiricists like Locke and Condillac, largely based on the rationalist belief in the innateness of the form of reason, which he claims is either absent within, or actively denied by, empiricist linguists. Chomsky's history, however, is suspect, and largely driven by his desire to discredit all behaviourist or associationist theories of linguistics, whose antecedents he presumes to be empiricist. Careful reading of thinkers like Condillac and Locke, however, reveals a greater similarity with the Cartesians than Chomsky would like to allow, and others that claim their own place in the empiricist tradition (e.g. Schlegel) are almost uncritically cited by Chomsky as 'Cartesian' thinkers. Because the rationalist tradition of linguistics shares some fundamental precepts with its empiricist counterparts, I will forgo a discussion of this kind of empiricism, here. I will, however, consider some 'empiricist' refutations of 'Cartesian' linguistic principles. See Noam Chomsky, *Cartesian Linguistics* (New York: Harpers and Row, 1966), and Hans Aarslef, *From Locke to Saussure: Essays on the*



*Study of Language and Intellectual History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982), pp. 101–19 for an interesting critique.

- 4 This statement can be found in Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (trans. Lewis White Beck; New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1951), p. 70. Jere Surber is almost solely responsible for drawing this passage to the attention of English-speaking scholars, and has also given us many valuable explications of Kant in relation to his contemporary linguistic critics. See, for example, Jere Surber, 'The Problems of Language in German Idealism: An Historical and Conceptual Overview', in *Phenomenology on Kant, German Idealism, Hermeneutics and Logic* (ed. O. K. Wiengand et al.; Amsterdam: Kluwer, 2000), pp. 305–36.
- 5 Kant, *Prolegomena*, p. 70.
- 6 For an excellent account of this movement and the debates it created, see the introduction to Jere Surber, *Metacritique: The Linguistic Assault on German Idealism* (Amherst: Humanity, 2001).
- 7 These positive programmes range from the proposed eradication of the confusion created by contingent natural language through a new universal characteristic (Maimon) to the attempt at deriving the form and content of language from our faculties of sense and understanding (Herder) to a neo-mystical attempt to expose the fullness of human spirit contained in poetic and mythological usages of language (Hamann). The relevant materials are translated with superb introductions in Surber, *Metacritique*.
- 8 While it is difficult to assess whether or not Fichte was directly responding to these criticisms, I agree with Surber that his linguistics is most profitably read through the lens of the Metacritical challenge.
- 9 J. G. Fichte, 'Von der Sprachfähigkeit und dem Ursprung der Sprache', (trans. Jere Surber) in *Language and German Idealism: Fichte's Linguistic Philosophy* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanity, 1996), pp. 119–45 (121).
- 10 Fichte, 'Sprachfähigkeit', p. 123.
- 11 Fichte, 'Sprachfähigkeit', p. 123.
- 12 Fichte, 'Sprachfähigkeit', p. 120.
- 13 My account of Husserl's theory of language is drawn mostly from the fourth of his 1900/01 *Logical Investigations*. While this is an early text, it is arguably the ground for much phenomenological investigation into language. See Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, vol. II (trans. J. N. Findlay; New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 47–75. My reading is indebted to Lampert, *Synthesis and Backward Reference in Husserl's Logical Investigations*, pp. 88–108.

- 14 My focus, here, is his 1892 paper 'On *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*', in *The Frege Reader* (ed. Michael Beaney; Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 151–71.
- 15 The relevant material is drawn from the 1916 collection of notes compiled by his students, contained in Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Roy Harris; London: Duckworth, 1983). Citations are to the standard pagination.
- 16 Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 97.
- 17 Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 99 (trans. mod.).
- 18 In the concluding chapter, we will compare it to two others: Gadamer's hermeneutics and Derrida's deconstruction.
- 19 Because my focus is on the general framework of language out of which one can undertake more specific investigations, I will leave aside analyses of specific linguistic phenomena such as written contracts in the *Philosophy of Right*, poetry in the *Aesthetics* and mythological language in the *Philosophy of Religion*.
- 20 Daniel Cook, *Language in the Philosophy of Hegel* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), p. 40.
- 21 Cook, *Language in the Philosophy of Hegel*, p. 184.
- 22 Richard Rorty, *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1967), p. 11. For an insightful discussion of Hegel's relation to the 'linguistic turn', see Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 141–56.
- 23 David Lamb, *Language and Perception in Hegel and Wittgenstein* (New York: St. Martin's, 1980). Similar conclusions can be found in David Lamb, *Hegel: From Foundation to System* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1980).
- 24 Lamb, *Language and Perception in Hegel and Wittgenstein*, p. 88.
- 25 Ivan Soll, *An Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969).
- 26 Gilbert Plumer, 'Hegel on Singular Demonstrative Reference', *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 11 (1980), pp. 71–94.
- 27 Katharine Dulceit, 'Can Hegel Refer to Particulars?', *Owl of Minerva* 17:2 (1986), pp. 181–94; 'Language, Objects and the Missing Link: Toward a Hegelian Theory of Reference', in J. O. Surber (ed.), *Hegel and Language* (Albany: SUNY, 2006), pp. 145–64.
- 28 Theodor Bodammer, *Hegels Deutung der Sprache* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1969).
- 29 J. N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-examination* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1958), p. 151.

- 30 Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, p. 143.
- 31 Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, p. 143.
- 32 Cook himself recognizes this problem (cf. *Language in the Philosophy of Hegel*, pp. 28–39), but does little to justify his reading in light of it.
- 33 Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (ed. R. Queneau; trans. J. Nichols, Jr.; Ithaca: Cornell, 1980).
- 34 Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, p. 3.
- 35 This view is echoed, as a critique of Hegel, in Georges Bataille, *Inner Experience* (trans. L. A. Boldt; Albany: SUNY, 1988). For my Hegelian response, see Jim Vernon, 'Homogeneity and Heterogeneity: Bataille and Hegel', *Dialogue* XLIII: 2 (2004), pp. 317–38.
- 36 For a similar account, see J. D. Peters, '“The Root of Humanity”: Hegel on Communication and Language', in *Figuring the Self: Subject, Absolute and Others in Classical German Philosophy* (ed. D. Klemm and G. Zoller; Albany: SUNY, 1997), pp. 227–44.
- 37 H. S. Harris, 'The Concept of Recognition in Hegel's Jena Manuscripts', in *Hegel's Dialectic of Desire and Recognition: Texts and Commentary* (ed. John O'Neill; Albany: SUNY, 1996), pp. 233–52.
- 38 H. S. Harris, 'The Concept of Recognition in Hegel's Jena Manuscripts', p. 243.
- 39 Jürgen Habermas, 'Labour and Interaction: Remarks on Hegel's Jena *Philosophy of Mind*', in O'Neill (ed.), *Hegel's Dialectic of Desire and Recognition: Texts and Commentary*, pp. 123–48. Compare with Ardis B. Collins, 'Hegel on Language, Citizenship, and the Educational Function of the Workplace: The Marxist Challenge', *Owl of Minerva* 32:1 (2000), pp. 21–43.
- 40 Joseph L. Navickas, *Consciousness and Reality: Hegel's Philosophy of Subjectivity* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1976), pp. 229. On the connection between linguistic assimilation and political identity in Hegel, see Mark Tunick, 'Hegel on Political Identity and the Ties that Bind', in *Beyond Liberalism and Communitarianism: Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (ed. Robert R. Williams; Albany: SUNY, 2001), pp. 67–89.
- 41 Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman; Evanston: Northwestern, 1974), p. 403.
- 42 Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 402.
- 43 H. S. Harris, 'The Concept of Recognition in Hegel's Jena



- Manuscripts', p. 242. See also Donald Verene, *Hegel's Recollection: A Study of Images in the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Albany: SUNY, 1985) and John Smith, 'The Language of Mastery and the Mastery of Language: The Recognition of Rhetoric in Hegel', *Clio* 23:4 (1994), pp. 377-94.
- 44 H. S. Harris, *Hegel: Phenomenology and System* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), pp. 62-63.
- 45 Jere Surber, 'German Idealism Under Fire: Fichte, Hegel and "Metacriticism"', in *Hegel on the Modern World* (ed. Ardis B. Collins; Albany: SUNY, 1995), pp. 93-109.
- 46 Hermann J. Cloeren, 'The Linguistic Turn in Kierkegaard's Attack on Hegel', *International Studies in Philosophy* 17:3 (1985), pp. 1-73, chastises Hegel for ignoring this problem, citing it as the basis for the superiority of Anglo-American 'linguistic' philosophy to Hegelian thinking. This book is a sustained rejoinder to such hasty 'linguistic' rejections of Hegelianism.
- 47 John Burbidge, 'Language and Recognition', in *Method and Speculation in Hegel's Phenomenology* (ed. Merold Westphal; New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982), pp. 85-94 (p. 87); compare his *On Hegel's Logic: Fragments of a Commentary* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1981), pp. 21-34.
- 48 My characterization of the left/right split is indebted to John McCumber, *The Company of Words: Hegel, Language, and Systematic Philosophy* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993).
- 49 G. W. G. Mure, *A Study of Hegel's Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1950), p. 22.
- 50 Malcolm Clark, *Logic and System: A Study of the Transition from Vorstellung to Thought in the Philosophy of Hegel* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1971), p. xi.
- 51 Clark, *Logic and System*, p. 97.
- 52 Joseph Simon, *Das Problem der Sprache Bei Hegel* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1966), p. 13; see esp. pp. 175-204.
- 53 Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence* (trans. L. Lawlor and Amit Sen; Albany: SUNY, 1995), pp. 188-89. Compare with the similar, but more theological reading of linguistic finitude in Karl Löwith, 'Hegel und die Sprache', *Die neue Rundschau* 76 (1965), pp. 278-97.
- 54 Burbidge, 'Language and Recognition', p. 93.
- 55 Richard Dean Winfield, 'Hegel vs. the New Orthodoxy', in *Hegel and his Critics: Philosophy in the Aftermath of Hegel* (ed. William Desmond; Albany: SUNY, 1989), pp. 219-35 (p. 231); compare Winfield, 'Logic,

- Language, and the Autonomy of Reason', *Idealistic Studies* 17 (1987), pp. 109–21.
- 56 Winfield, 'Hegel vs. the New Orthodoxy', p. 231.
- 57 Werner Marx, *Absolute Reflexion und Sprache* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1967).
- 58 Marx, *Absolute Reflexion*, p. 31.
- 59 Marx, *Absolute Reflexion*, p. 24.
- 60 Bodammer, *Hegels Deutung*, p. 65.
- 61 Bodammer, *Hegels Deutung*, p. 224.
- 62 Bodammer, *Hegels Deutung*, p. 238.
- 63 McCumber, *The Company of Words*, pp. 247–48.
- 64 J. Derbolav, 'Hegel und die Sprache: Ein Beitrag zur Standortbestimmung der Sprachphilosophie im Systemsdenken des Deutschen Idealismus', in *Sprache – Schlüssel zur Welt* (ed. Helmut Gipper; Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1959), pp. 56–86 (57).
- 65 Jacques Derrida, 'The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology', in *Margins of Philosophy* (trans. Alan Bass; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), pp. 69–108. Karin De Boer, 'The Infinite Movement of Self-Conception and its Inconceivable Finitude: Hegel on Logos and Language', *Dialogue* XL (2001), pp. 75–97 also argues that thought seeks to abstract itself from the sensuous elements of language; elements that she associates primarily with the *sound* of language. If the corrupting elements of language are limited to its sound, then thinking might be free of taint if it *silently* determines its own linguistic expression. Thus, De Boer claims that Hegel holds that 'writing his *Logic*, [enables him] to let the silent self-differentiation of the absolute concept take place in a way which is no longer affected by the arbitrariness of sounds' (p. 86, my emphasis). This interpretation of Hegel's theory of language nonetheless seems inconsistent with Hegel's text, most particularly in so far as it argues that he favours silence over speech, or abstract contemplation over concrete expression.
- 66 Richard Dean Winfield, *Overcoming Foundations: Studies in Systematic Philosophy* (New York: Columbia, 1989), pp. 88–89.
- 67 The comparison is not entirely accurate. McCumber does claim that his representational words are those of the left, and can be collectively called 'a representation of the world and the expression of a culture' (*Company of Words*, p. 227), however, he nonetheless appears to take this relation away by claiming that representational words are 'fully worked up' universals, which lack indexicality and ostensive definition (p. 228). They are, as it were, communal expressions that

- have been purified by experts into a ‘“state of the art” set of representations’ or ‘expert discourse’ (p. 228). Because McCumber calls this the discourse of the left, I have chosen to represent it in that fashion, although it is questionable whether McCumber’s representation of it is justifiable. This reading is followed by Jeffrey Reid, ‘Objective Language and Scientific Truth in Hegel’, in J. O. Surber (ed.), *Hegel and Language*, pp. 95–110 and, albeit for vastly different purposes, by Slavoj Žižek, *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Women and Causality* (New York: Verso, 2005), pp. 43–47.
- 68 McCumber, *The Company of Words*, p. 308.
  - 69 McCumber, *The Company of Words*, p. 309.
  - 70 On the organic development of logical terms, see John Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel’s Logic* (Peterborough: Broadview, 2006).
  - 71 Compare John Protevi, ‘Derrida and Hegel: “Différance” and “Unterschied”’, *International Studies in Philosophy* 25:3 (1993), pp. 59–74 which, while never recommending a specifically philosophical lexicon, does describe the task of thinking as ‘the ordering of categories lying dormant and disordered in the grammar of natural languages’ (p. 67).
  - 72 Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Speculative Remark: One of Hegel’s Bon Mots* (trans. C. Surprenant; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 36.
  - 73 Nancy, *The Speculative Remark*, p. 113.
  - 74 Nancy, *The Speculative Remark*, p. 142.
  - 75 Jean-Luc Nancy, *Hegel: The Restlessness of the Negative* (trans. J. Smith and S. Miller; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2002), p. 36.
  - 76 Franz Schmidt, ‘Hegels Philosophie der Sprache’, *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 9 (1961), pp. 1479–86.
  - 77 McCumber, *The Company of Words*, p. 228.
  - 78 McCumber, *The Company of Words*, p. 316.
  - 79 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel’s Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies* (trans. P. Christopher Smith; New Haven: Yale, 1976), p. 92.
  - 80 Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, p. 142–43.
  - 81 Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, p. 142–43.
  - 82 Nancy, *The Speculative Remark*, p. 90.
  - 83 Willem A. DeVries, *Hegel’s Theory of Mental Activity* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1988).
  - 84 Cook, *Language in the Philosophy of Hegel*, p. 184.
  - 85 Derrida, ‘The Pit and the Pyramid’, p. 90.
  - 86 Surber, ‘The Problem of Language in German Idealism’, p. 333.
  - 87 Surber, ‘German Idealism Under Fire’, p. 105.



## Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 This view resonates with the starting point of Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*, although he ultimately concludes that Hegel's texts do not contain such a system.
- 2 Thus, my methodological starting point differs from, for example, Bodammer's contextualization of individual sets of comments according to text and theme, and Cook's concern with temporal period. The merits of my methodology, I hope, will be made clear as the exposition unfolds.
- 3 For discussion of 'linguistic competence' and 'surface grammar' in modern linguistics see Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965), pp. 3–18.
- 4 'Rede zum Schuljahrsabshluß am 29. September 1809', in W4, pp. 312–26.
- 5 This is a concern that dominated Hegel's early thoughts about language, and his conclusions regarding it appear to have remained virtually unchanged from his earliest writings forward. For a brief but thorough recounting of Hegel's remarks on language in his youthful writings, see Cook, *Language in the Philosophy of Hegel*, pp. 15–18.
- 6 The measures were those initiated by Hegel's friend Niethammer. For details on both the reforms and their mixed public reception, see Clark Butler and Chistiane Seiler (eds and trans.), *Hegel: The Letters* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1984), pp. 186–232.
- 7 See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall; New York: Continuum, 2nd edn., 1998), for a discussion of Hegel's place in the historical development of the concept of *Bildung* as 'sacrificing particularity for the sake of the universal' (p. 12). Of course, for Hegel this sacrifice is made with the express purpose of finding the universal within one's own particular expressions, as we shall discuss below.
- 8 This places Hegel in dialogue with the universal grammarians of his day, as well as with their critics. This should not surprise us, since the contention that logic and grammar are intimately related or even identical was commonplace in Hegel's time. For an excellent survey of this debate and its origins, see Peter H. Salus, 'Universal Grammar 1000–1850', in *History of Linguistic Thought and Contemporary Linguistics* (ed. Herman Parrett; Berlin, de Gruyter, 1976), pp. 85–101. While Hegel undoubtedly bears the influence of this debate, and even (as we shall see) seems to have taken sides with Humboldt to some degree within it, his conception of logic remains unique and thus comparisons to his contemporaries are of only limited value.

- 9 Hegel names these as the fundamental grammatical categories, through which thoughts 'are stamped with objective form' (W 5, p. 20/SL, p. 32). It is thus from these basic categories that the rich set of relations that constitute universal grammar must be developed.

## Notes to Chapter 2

- 1 As reflected in the title of Petry's translation, *The Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*.
- 2 An excellent account of the relationship between the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Philosophy of Nature* can be found in DeVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity*, pp. 1–52.
- 3 Cf., Jere Surber, 'Heidegger's Critique of Hegel's Notion of Time', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 39 (1979), pp. 358–77: 'to isolate any moment from its place in the whole system and view it as in itself autonomous must immediately cancel its true nature as a stage of a more comprehensive project' (p. 366).
- 4 My reading of the entire 'Freedom of Self-consciousness' section is indebted to John Russon, *The Self and its Body in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997), pp. 15–29.
- 5 Cf. J. Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Penguin, 1997), pp. 361–66 (Bk. III, Chs. 1–2).
- 6 Cf. Berkeley's Introduction to the 1710 *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, contained in George Berkeley, *A New Theory of Vision and Other Writings* (London: Dent, 1963), pp. 93–111. David Farrell Krell, *Of Memory, Reminiscence, and Writing* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1990), McCumber, *The Company of Words* and John Sallis, *Spacings – Of Reason and Imagination in the Texts of Kant, Fichte, Hegel* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987) and 'Imagination and Presentation in Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit', in *Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit* (ed. Peter Stillman; New York: State University of New York, 1987), pp. 66–88, all write as though images are little pictures in the mind, or at least make no effort to explain how Hegel's images prove immune to Berkeley's challenge. While Hegel's use of '*Bild*' may allow for such a reading, the general implausibility of the view should make us read Hegel's text closer. DeVries is closer to my reading of these passages, although his reading is slightly constrained by a concern to translate Hegel into the language of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy.
- 7 Here I follow Derrida, 'The Pit and the Pyramid'.
- 8 This is the condensed version of the *Encyclopaedia* given to the

- upper-year students in the *Gymnasium*. For a thorough account of the progress of Hegel's conception of the imagination, from his earliest lectures on spirit to the 1830 *Encyclopaedia*, see Jennifer Bates, *Hegel's Theory of Imagination* (Albany: SUNY, 2004).
- 9 On the advance speech makes over other forms of expression, see Susan Hahn, 'Hegel on Saying and Showing', *Journal of Value Inquiry* 28:2 (1994), pp. 151–68.
  - 10 John McCumber, 'A Question of Origin: Hegel's Privileging of Spoken over Written Language', *Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain* 47/48 (2003), pp. 50–60, claims that speech is superior to writing because it is 'produced from the interior cooperation of various organs of the human body [and thus] is rooted in our embodiment' in ways that language created 'by the hand' is not (p. 58). However, to hold that only the vocal tone can truly express embodied thought entails the untenable conclusion that the deaf and mute cannot express it, ignoring the articulate and functional expressions they create 'by their hands'. Hegel's account, I shall argue presently, allows us to understand that they still *sign*, even if they do not vocalize.
  - 11 I follow Derrida, 'The Pit and the Pyramid' in tracing the ideality of speech to the *Aesthetics*.
  - 12 Again, this is true only if the requisite organs are present. If they are not, then ideality must be expressed by some other moving, active means. This explains why attempts to force the deaf or mute to communicate exclusively by means of writing have always failed, and why active sign language is their most natural expression (cf. Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct* [New York: William Morrow, 1994], pp. 36–37). What matters, here, is the motion that can be recognized as arising from an active subject.
  - 13 In this respect, Hegel's concept of the sign is similar to that of Saussure. For further discussion, see Tony Burns, 'The Purloined Hegel: Semiology in the Thought of Saussure and Derrida', *History of the Human Sciences* 13:4 (2000), pp. 1–24.
  - 14 Lexemes are the minimal meaningful units within a language that constitute its lexicon, e.g. 'berry', '-ness', 'and' 'pre-', 's', etc. We find intimations of this concept in the mediaeval concept of *vox* articulated into *dictio*. For discussion see G. A. Padley, *Grammatical Theory in Western Europe, 1500–1700: The Latin Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
  - 15 Thus, it is inaccurate to claim (as does, e.g., Derrida, 'The Pit and the Pyramid') that Hegel gives primacy to the irreducible simplicity



- of the word or name, failing to include 'larger and smaller unities' than nouns and verbs (p. 96).
- 16 Here I follow Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*, in focusing on the exteriority and pre-existence of language-signs (pp. 23–37).
  - 17 Thus, Derrida's claim that Hegel fails to heed his own caution regarding linguistic analysis and 'reduces the theory of writing to the rank of an accessory question, treated in an appendix, as a digression' on the path to thinking is unjust ('The Pit and The Pyramid', p. 94).
  - 18 This is one of the 'pictograms' in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. On the non-phonetic elements of that language, see the introduction to Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 3rd edn, 1988).
  - 19 On Hegel's misinterpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics, see Jay Lampert, 'Hegel and Ancient Egypt: History and Becoming', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 35:1 (1995), pp. 43–58; on Chinese characters, see Derrida, 'The Pit and the Pyramid'.
  - 20 Here I mean difficulties such as the remnants of earlier pictographs present in most phonetic alphabets, the phonetic elements of hieroglyphic systems, etc.
  - 21 See, e.g. John Chadwick, *The Decipherment of Linear B* (New York: Cambridge, 1958); for the nature and use of the common number systems throughout the early Middle Eastern world, see Maurice Pope, *The Story of Archaeological Decipherment* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1975). Hegel, in the *Philosophy of History*, notes that the Romans required writing because they were a trading people and needed contracts. In the *Philosophy of Right*, written contracts produce the first inter-subjective guarantee of ownership. Writing is thus always introduced as a way of making intentions more objective by opening them up to witness by others.
  - 22 Pinker, *Language Instinct*, p. 191.
  - 23 There are connections, here, to the concept of 'archi-writing' in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (trans. G. Spivak; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976). Others have noted various similarities between Derrida's and Hegel's accounts of the sign, e.g. Deborah Chaffin, 'Hegelian Dialectic and the Limits of Representation', in *Postmodernism and Continental Philosophy* (ed. H. Silverman and D. Welton; Albany: SUNY, 1987), pp. 85–95 and 'Hegel, Derrida, and the Sign', in *Derrida and Deconstruction* (ed. H. Silverman; New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 77–91; Jens Brockmeier, 'Language, Thought and Writing: Hegel after Deconstruction and the Linguistic Turn',

- Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain* 21–22 (1990), pp. 30–54; Tanja Stähler, 'Does Hegel Privilege Speech over Writing?: A Critique of Jacques Derrida', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 11:2 (2003), pp. 191–204. None, however, brings Hegel as close to Derrida as I am suggesting we should. In the concluding chapter we shall have occasion to bring Derrida and Hegel into closer comparison.
- 24 Wallace unfortunately renders this as 'meaningless words', eliminating the difference between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*. I follow Petry in translating *Sinn* as 'sense'.
  - 25 Kathleen Dow Magnus, *Hegel and the Symbolic Mediation of Spirit* (New York: SUNY, 2001), p.103. Her account draws upon Stephen Houlgate, 'Hegel, Derrida and Restricted Economy: The Case of Mechanical Memory', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 34:1 (1996), pp. 79–94.
  - 26 Both Magnus and Houlgate, in fact, translate '*sinnlos*' as 'meaningless'. As I have said, there is no plausible reason to read 'wholly unrelated words' as mere 'sounds' (Houlgate, 'Hegel, Derrida and Restricted Economy', p. 85). Hegel's account of mechanical memory, however, does mention of the loss of '*Bedeutung*', which I will discuss below.
  - 27 Magnus, *Hegel and the Symbolic Mediation*, pp. 103–104.
  - 28 Surber, 'Heidegger's Critique of Hegel's Notion of Time', p. 368.
  - 29 Kevin Thompson, 'Fragmentation, Contamination, Systematicity: The Threats of Representation and the Immanence of Thought', in *Hegel and Language* (ed. Jere O'Neill Surber; Albany: SUNY, 2006), pp. 35–53 claims that names as such arise because, lacking reference to empirical intuition, memorized names 'lack an inherent way of relating themselves to each other. Reproductive memory is thus ... without an elemental grammar' (p. 45). While perhaps the only commentator to recognize that names as such are developed in order to grant universal syntax to language, Thompson neither frames the problem in terms of the *subjective* associations between terms, nor does he account for the difference between everyday language and the purified material of logical thinking.

### Notes to Chapter 3

- 1 For more typical readings, see J. M. E. McTaggart, *A Commentary on Hegel's Logic* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), pp. 187–240 and Errol E. Harris, *An Interpretation of the Logic of Hegel* (Lanham, MD: University Press, 1983), pp. 214–55. Thomas Seebhom, 'The Grammar of Hegel's Dialectic', *Hegel-Studien* 11 (1975), pp. 149–80

- offers a 'grammar' or 'hermeneutical logic' (p. 151) of the concept, but as a formalization of the dialectical method, arising from the 'speculative assumption' (p. 158) that the Absolute can be treated as a concept. As such, it is distant from the conceptions of both grammar and the 'Concept' that we are deducing here.
- 2 Cf. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Dialectic: The Explanation of Possibility* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988): 'Hegel accepts what in his day were the standard divisions of the study of logic' (p. 81).
  - 3 This is a common line of response to Russell's charge that Hegel conflated two kinds of predication. For the charge, see Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961), pp. 48–49; in reply, see, for example, Katherine Dulckeit, 'Hegel's Revenge on Russell: The "Is" of Identity vs. the "Is" of Predication', in *Hegel and his Critics: Philosophy in the Aftermath of Hegel* (ed. William Desmond; Albany: SUNY, 1989), pp. 111–31.
  - 4 It would be too great a task to note, let alone defend the relevant differences of my reading from more standard accounts of the 'Concept'. Moreover, nothing in my account precludes the reading of Hegel's text as providing renewed justification for the traditional forms of logic, or a new basis for ontology, etc. As such, I will forgo responding to secondary literature in this chapter, and restrict my discussion to the isolated development of universal grammar.
  - 5 We will proceed through the more detailed (and more famous) account in the *Science of Logic*, rather than its compact presentation in the first volume of the *Encyclopaedia*.
  - 6 On the necessary separation of syntax from meaningful sense in modern linguistics, see Pinker, *The Language Instinct*, pp. 87–89.
  - 7 Thus, Hegel shares the guiding insight of Claude Lancelot and Antoine Arnauld, *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée* (Paris: Allia, 1997). For a discussion of the influence of this theory on contemporary linguistics, see Chomsky, *Cartesian Linguistics*, pp. 31–51. Unlike these theorists, however, Hegel demonstrates the necessity of this relation as the condition for the possibility of determinate expression, rather than abstracting it from contingent linguistic practice.
  - 8 For a representative reading of this 'empirical abstraction' interpretation, see Burbidge, *On Hegel's Logic*, pp. 125–34. Of course, nothing prevents this form from being utilized to make such predications; to the contrary, I shall argue that this universal form is that through which we make such everyday qualitative distinctions.



Abstractions from everyday use, however, cannot give the form the necessity Hegel claims for it, and mind demands of it.

- 9 Cf. '[The reversal reveals that] a subject is, on the contrary, not a *single* property such as its predicate enunciates' (W 6, p. 317/SL, p. 636).
- 10 John Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel's Logic*, argues that while categorical judgment 'may have the same form as an affirmative judgment – S is P – it presupposes a different content' (p. 86). While this is not an uncommon reading of Hegel, if the judgment is differentiated by a content which expresses the relation, it is unclear precisely why the form of the judgment needs to be altered to express the relation. Assuredly it does not take a formal difference to distinguish between the relations that hold between the content of 'Gaius is funny tonight' and 'Gaius is mortal'. It is only by abstracting from content, and considering the presupposed relation that a change in judgment form becomes necessary. This does not mean that all valid judgments are necessary, but that the very development of the formal difference between merely contingent predications and necessary ones is only objective if the relation itself, rather than its contingent content, is what is being determined.
- 11 Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel's Logic*, p. 87. Burbidge, however, contingently grounds this judgment in the fact that, 'as Kant argued, universals are possibles, not actuals' (p. 87).
- 12 This, for example, is the view of Port-Royal authors who leave syllogistic inference out of their grammar, seemingly content to account for language in terms of conception (meaningful word) and judgment (formal word-relation).
- 13 Hegel, here, reverses the U and P, reflecting the fact that this form, which simply determines the invariable connection between U and P, is indifferent in regards to the specific places of the extremes.
- 14 The example is drawn from Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel's Logic*, p. 91.
- 15 Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel's Logic*, p. 92. Undoubtedly, Burbidge does not want to extend the set of terms as far as I am, but the general idea of mutual determination is correct.

#### Notes to Chapter 4

- 1 Günter Wohlfart, *Der spekulativ Satz* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1981), without developing an explicit grammar, similarly argues that 'the speculative content' of philosophy is the 'insight into the specu-

- lative relation of the syntactical form and semantics' (p. 242) of language.
- 2 Cf. W3, pp. 65–67/PS, §71–72. Here, I side with Nancy, *The Speculative Remark* and Daniel J. Cook, 'Leibniz and Hegel on Language', in *Hegel and the History of Philosophy* (ed. Joseph J. O'Malley *et al.*; The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 95–108, against the right-wing readings.
  - 3 Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, for example, argues that Hegel's examples express strictly universal contents that are 'clearly distinguished from propositions or judgments with a sensuous, representational content' (p. 146). On this reading, sentences would not be grasped speculatively; speculative concepts would be expressed propositionally. A similar argument is offered in Ivan Soll, 'Sentences Against Sentences: An Aspect of the Hegelian Dialectic', *Dialectics and Humanism* 1 (1974), pp. 67–73.
  - 4 Here, I side with Jere Surber, 'Hegel's Speculative Sentence', *Hegel-Studien* 10 (1975), pp. 210–30, and Chong-Fuk Lau, 'Language and Metaphysics: The Dialectics of Hegel's Speculative Proposition', in *Hegel and Language* (ed. J. O. Surber; Albany: SUNY, 2006), pp. 55–74. Surber does focus on the specificity of Hegel's example, claiming that 'God' and 'being' are the most basic and universal categories of Hegel's system, encompassing within their meaning all other words and predications. While a creative and interesting reading, I do not think the applicability of the speculative method rests upon any given linguistic content, regardless of content.
  - 5 This second level is absent in the reading of these pages in by Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* and is only vaguely touched on in Nancy, *The Speculative Remark*. Surber, 'Hegel's Speculative Sentence', remains definitive for attempting to systematically relate the two levels in an integrated account.
  - 6 Howard Kainz, 'Hegel on the Bacchanalian Revel of Truth', *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 28:2 (1995), pp. 146–52, while offering a penetrating reading of the drunken dance of truth, over-emphasizes the analytical detection of its rhythm, arguing that the Hegelian philosopher can only be successful if he 'refuses to join' (p. 152) the movement of truth.
  - 7 Humboldt is the only linguist explicitly referred to by Hegel in his account of language acquisition, and thus we should not find this similarity surprising.
  - 8 Many of the ideas I will develop, here, are indebted to John Russon, 'The Metaphysics and the Hermeneutics of Social Life: Hegel's

- Phenomenological System', *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 36:1 (1998), pp. 81–101, and Jay Lampert, 'Hegel in the Future' (unpublished). In a sense, I am providing the linguistic ground for the 'hermeneutic pluralism' they advocate.
- 9 My reading, here, is indebted to Rodney R. Coltman, 'Gadamer, Hegel, and the Middle of Language', *Philosophy Today* 40 (Spring 1996), pp. 151–59 and Jay Lampert, 'Gadamer and Cross-Cultural Hermeneutics', *The Philosophical Forum* 28:4 (Summer 1997), pp. 351–68. See Francis J. Ambrosio, 'On Making Oneself at Home with Hegel', *Owl of Minerva* 19:1 (1987), pp. 23–40, for a discussion of Gadamer's ambivalent attitude towards Hegel. For a reading of Hegel dealing with similar themes in the realm of gesture, see John Russon, 'Reading and the Body in Hegel', *Clio* 22 (1993), pp. 321–36; and on cultural identity and discourse, see John Russon, 'Hegel, Heidegger, and Ethnicity: The Ritual Basis of Self-Identity', *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 33:4 (Winter 1995), pp. 509–32 or *Reading Hegel's Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana, 2004), pp. 169–83.
  - 10 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 384.
  - 11 He borrows the term from Husserl. See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 300–307.
  - 12 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 458.
  - 13 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 440–41.
  - 14 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 388. Frank Schalow, 'The Question of Being and the Recovery of Language Within Hegelian Thought', *Owl of Minerva* 24:2 (1993), pp. 163–80, despite its overly Heideggerian reading, is more accurate: 'Language ceases ... to be employed ... as a mere tool [and] emerges as having a power in its own right' (p. 179).
  - 15 Lampert, 'Gadamer and Cross-Cultural Hermeneutics', argues that Gadamer is ultimately undecided on the issue of whether a universal perspective is either possible or desirable. Irene Harvey, 'The Linguistic Basis of Truth for Hegel', *Man and World* 15 (1982), pp. 285–97, argues that, for Gadamer 'the *telos* of this dialogue is a forever deferred and horizontal notion' (p. 289), conflating Gadamer's hermeneutics with Derrida's systematic deferral. However, his resistance to Derrida's project for its subversion of the implicit trust and presupposed commonality present in language (cf. D. Michelfelder and R. E. Palmer [eds], *Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter* [Albany: SUNY, 1989]) seems to indicate that Gadamer holds the universal perspective as more than a merely regulatory ideal.



- 16 The ability of public language to make both private intentions and misinterpretations of others appear objective is a running theme in the *Phenomenology*, culminating in the linguistic self-reflection of the 'beautiful soul'.
- 17 On the affirmative structure of communication and its implicit desire for transparent communication, see, for example, J. Derrida, 'Ulysses Gramophone', in *Acts of Literature* (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 253–309, and 'Envois', in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (trans. Alan Bass; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987), pp. 3–256. On the mutual determination of desires, intention and marks of the other in Derrida's linguistics, see Jim Vernon, 'The People have Spoken?: Derrida, Democracy and Reciprocal Affirmation', *International Studies in Philosophy* 34:2 (2002), pp. 115–31.
- 18 Jacques Derrida, 'Signature, Event, Content', in *Margins of Philosophy* (trans. Alan Boss; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982), pp. 309–30 (315).
- 19 Derrida, 'Signature, Event, Content', p. 317.
- 20 Derrida, 'Signature, Event, Content', p. 316.
- 21 Thus, all so-called postmodern 'wilful misreadings' or 'strategic appropriations' of Hegel's system (e.g., J. M. Fritzman, 'Escaping Hegel', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 33:1 [1993], pp. 57–68; John Llewelyn, 'A Point of Almost Absolute Proximity to Hegel', in *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida* [ed. John Sallis; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987], pp. 87–95; John Smith, 'U-Topian Hegel: Dialectic and Its Other in Post-structuralism', *The German Quarterly* 60 [1987] pp. 237–61) are already anticipated by the system itself. Compare Jacques Derrida, *Glas* (trans. John P. Leavey, Jr. and Richard Rand; Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1990), e.g. pp. 227a–33a.
- 22 Again, this is a continual theme in the *Phenomenology*, from 'Sense-Certainty' to 'Morality'.
- 23 Compare the connection between philosophical expression and philosophical method presented in Angelica Nuzzo, 'The Language of Hegel's Speculative Philosophy', in *Hegel and Language* (ed. J. O. Surber; Albany: SUNY, 2006), pp. 75–91.

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